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PLAY METER Magazine

MARCH
VOLUME 24, No. 4 • 1998
FOR THE COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT/FEC INDUSTRY

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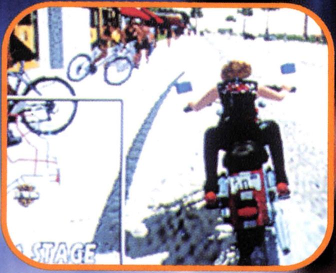

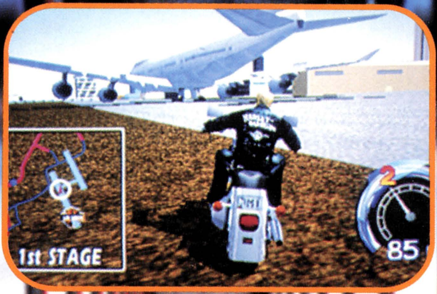
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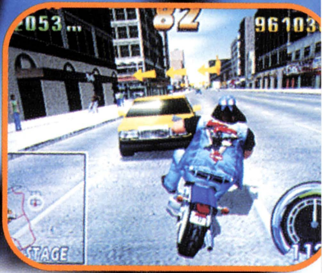
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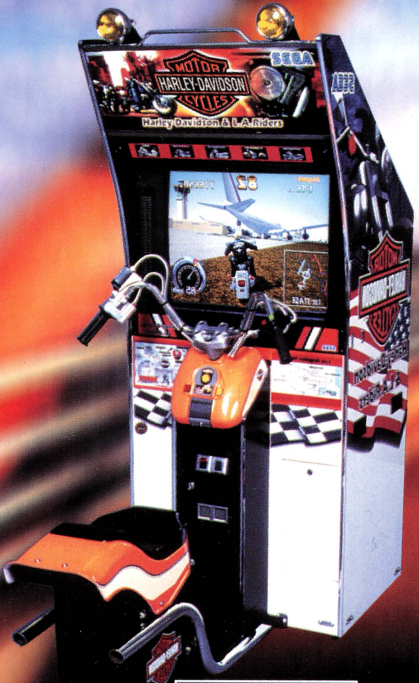
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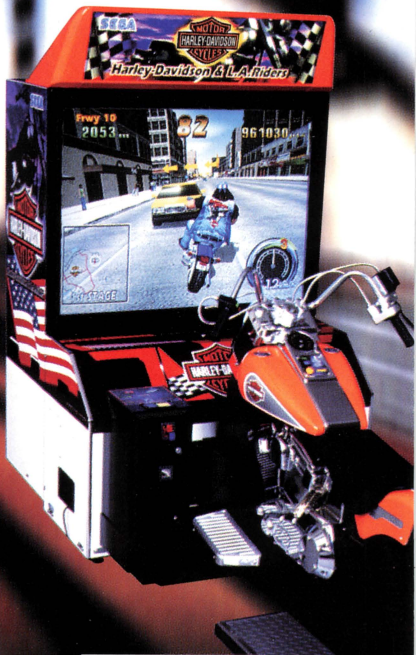
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Harley-Davidson and Sega, both seasoned veterans in their own right team up to form an awesome union.

Witness the excitement of this alliance! jump on a HOG and follow this new team as they rumble through the streets of Los Angeles.

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News BULLETIN

AAMA AND AMOA ANNOUNCE PROMOTION ALLIANCE

The American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) and the Amusement & Music Operator Association announced last month a cross promotion alliance for their respective trade shows: the Amusement Showcase International and the AMOA Expo International. The alliance consists of nine cross-marketing measures designed to enhance exposure for both organizations efforts.

"The associations feel that a cross promotion program will strengthen both shows by bringing in more buyers and sellers," said AAMA president Mike Rudowicz of Konami. "We have been told by the industry leaders that they want a spring and a fall show, so we will be working together to provide the best business environment for all segments of the industry at both shows."

AMOA president Don Hesch of A. H. Entertainers said the program has been a long time coming. "AAMA and AMOA have been working together on several industry projects including video content, dollar coin, and legislative initiatives. This cross promotion program is a natural extension of those efforts."

MADISON COIN MERGES WITH MODERN SPECIALTY

Madison Coin Machine of Madison, Wis., announced a merger last month with Modern Specialty, also headquartered in Madison. Former AMOA president Gene Urso, who has held ownership in Madison Coin since 1956, and his son and business partner Tony Urso said the decision was a difficult one to make. Their Milwaukee Coin Machine office will remain open.

"After weighing all of our options, we came to the conclusion that we should merge the Madison office and that Modern was the best candidate to meet all of our concerns," they wrote in a recent letter to their customers. "For almost one year we've been discussing the merger, its implications, and particular items that were important to everyone. We feel we have covered the bases well: employees, service issues, collections, equipment, leagues, moves, records, accounting–everything."

PAPA 5 DRAWS 350 COMPETITORS

The newly resurrected Professional and Amateur Pinball Association (PAPA) championship held at the Sahara Hotel

VISITORS FLOCK TO LONDON SHOW

A total of 20,700 attendees from 97 countries, including eight nations not previously represented, traveled to ATEI this year to check out the latest in coin-op entertainment, park and FEC equipment, and gaming products. *Play Meter*'s Randy Fromm filed his exclusive report in this issue (turn to page 135).

Photo-Me
Photo-Me
PHOTOVISION
STICKER PLAYER
Bob's Space Racers

in Las Vegas reportedly drew as many as 350 players. PAPA founder Steve Epstein thanked Williams Bally/Midway and Sega Pinball, both of which provided games and prizes, as well as Able Amusement, Betson West, and Mountain Coin for making the event a success. See next month's issue of *Play Meter* for full results of the competition.

CONSUMER SHOW DATES SET FOR MAY

With industry discussion increasingly focused on the potential the PC holds as a platform for video game content, two consumer game shows, both slated for May, will play a more prominent role on many industry members' spring calendars. They are the Computer Game Developers Conference (CGDC) and the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3).

In fact, the former trade show has gone so far as to change its name to the Computer, Coin-Op, and Console Game Developers Conference. The event will take place May 4-8 at the convention center in Long Beach, Calif. For more information, contact CGDC, (888)234-9476 or (415)905-2388; Web site (http://www.cgdc.com); e-mail (cgdc@mfi.com).

E3 will be held later that month, May 27-30, at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, Ga. For more information, contact E3, (800)315-1133 or (781)551-9800; fax (781)440-0359; Web site (http://www.e3expo.com).

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DAVE & BUSTER'S TO DEVELOP PACIFIC RIM LOCATIONS

An agreement signed last month at Dave & Buster's world headquarters in Dallas will pave the way for the development of the concept throughout the Pacific Rim. Signing the agreement were Dave Corriveau and Buster Corley, co-founders of the entertainment restaurant chain, and Ted Chin-Fan I, chairman of TaiMall Development Co.

As the official licensee of Dave & Buster's in the Pacific Rim, TaiMall plans to develop seven locations over the next several years, targeting locations in Taiwan, the Republic of China, and Hong Kong. The first location is slated to open in 1999 in a suburban Tapei mall

JVL OFFERS NEW FINANCING PLAN FOR OPERATORS

JVL, the Canadian-based manufacturer of amusement touch screen games, has introduced a new financing plan that will make it easier for route operators to purchase the company's *Concorde 2* CD-ROM-based amusement machine. The plan will remain in effect through April 30 and will be good for purchases of five or more units. "Basically, this plan will allow operators to put our new machines in an establishment with no payment for the first three months of the contract," said vice president of sales and marketing Mort Ansky. For details, contact the JVL corporate office, (800)296-6657 or (702)794-0405.

APA ANNOUNCES FUTURE TOURNAMENT DATES

As part of its 1998 calendar of events, the American Poolplayers Association (APA) recently released upcoming tournament dates. They include regional events that will take place across the country during the week of March 6-8. Following that, the Camel 8-Ball Classic Championship will be held in Las Vegas, April 16-18.

Other events this year include: NFL Players Billiards Challenge in Chicago (June 6), the APA 9-Ball National Team Championship and Camel 8-Ball Ladies National Team Championship in Las Vegas (July 31-Aug. 3), and the Camel 8-Ball National Team Championship in Las Vegas (Aug. 3-8). For more information, contact the APA, (314)625-8611; fax (314)625-2975.

APBI FILES SUIT AGAINST IMAGE DYNAMICS

America Photo Booth Inc., creator of the *Sticker Station* photo sticker machine, filed suit last month against Image Dynamics of Grand Prarie, Texas, for alleged patent infringement. Image Dynamics reportedly plans to distribute Atlus Dream Entertainment's *Print Club* machine in the United States. APBI and Atlus are currently involved in litigation over patent infringement, and the former is seeking injunctive relief and damages from Image Dynamics as well. Image Dynamics was formed as the result of a merger between Auto Photo Systems and Irata Inc. For more on the photo sticker patent controversy, turn to "Coin-Op" News.

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

☛ John Reckas, a veteran vending sales manager, has joined the Music-Vend/Dunis Group. He will focus his efforts on selling and servicing the distributors' lines of vending machines as well as Rowe bill changers.

☛ Rita Rokos has been named vice president of sales for Creative Electronics and Software (CES). Rokos was formerly at Capcom, where she coordinated market testing and supervised customer service. ▲

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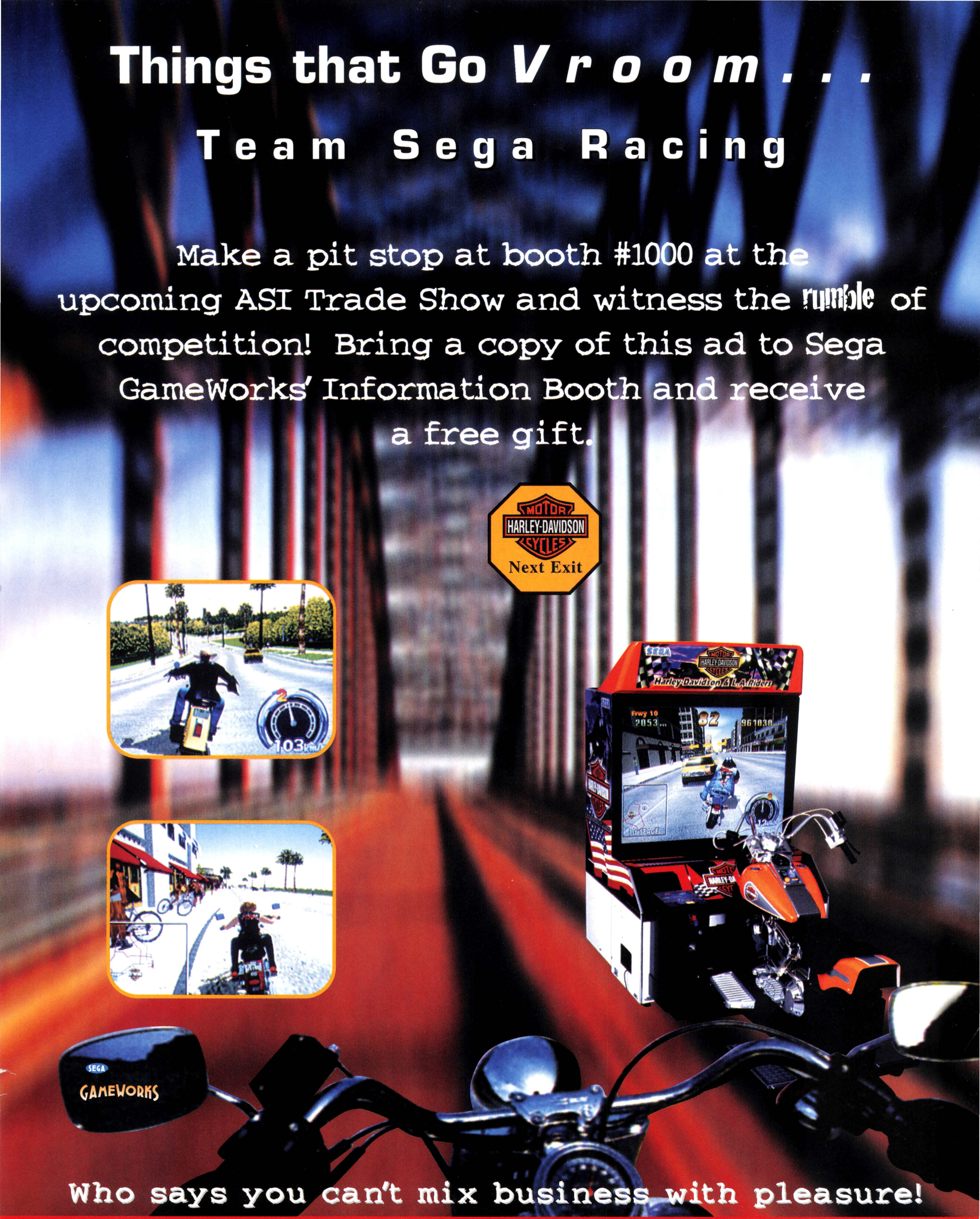
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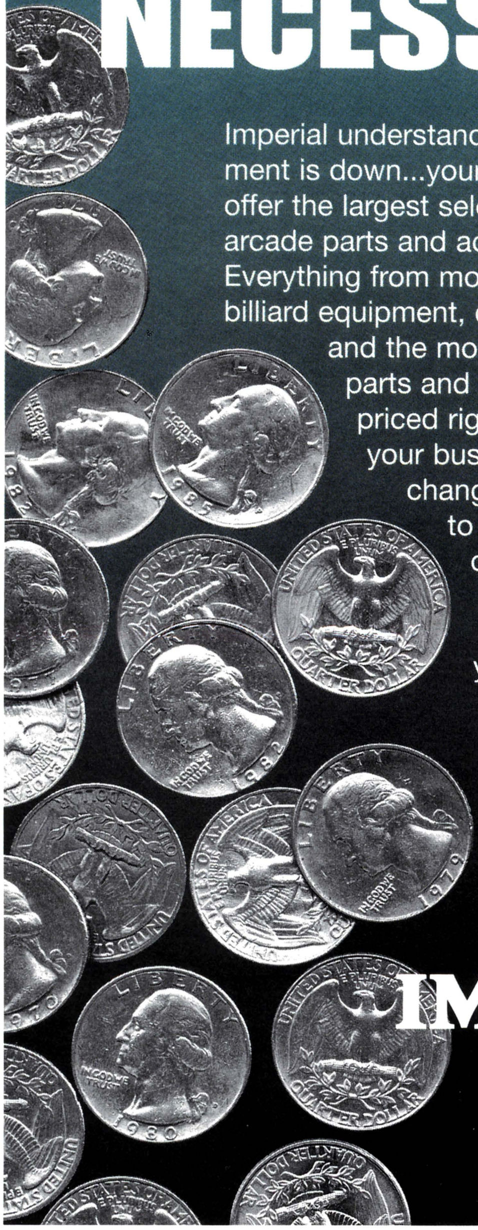

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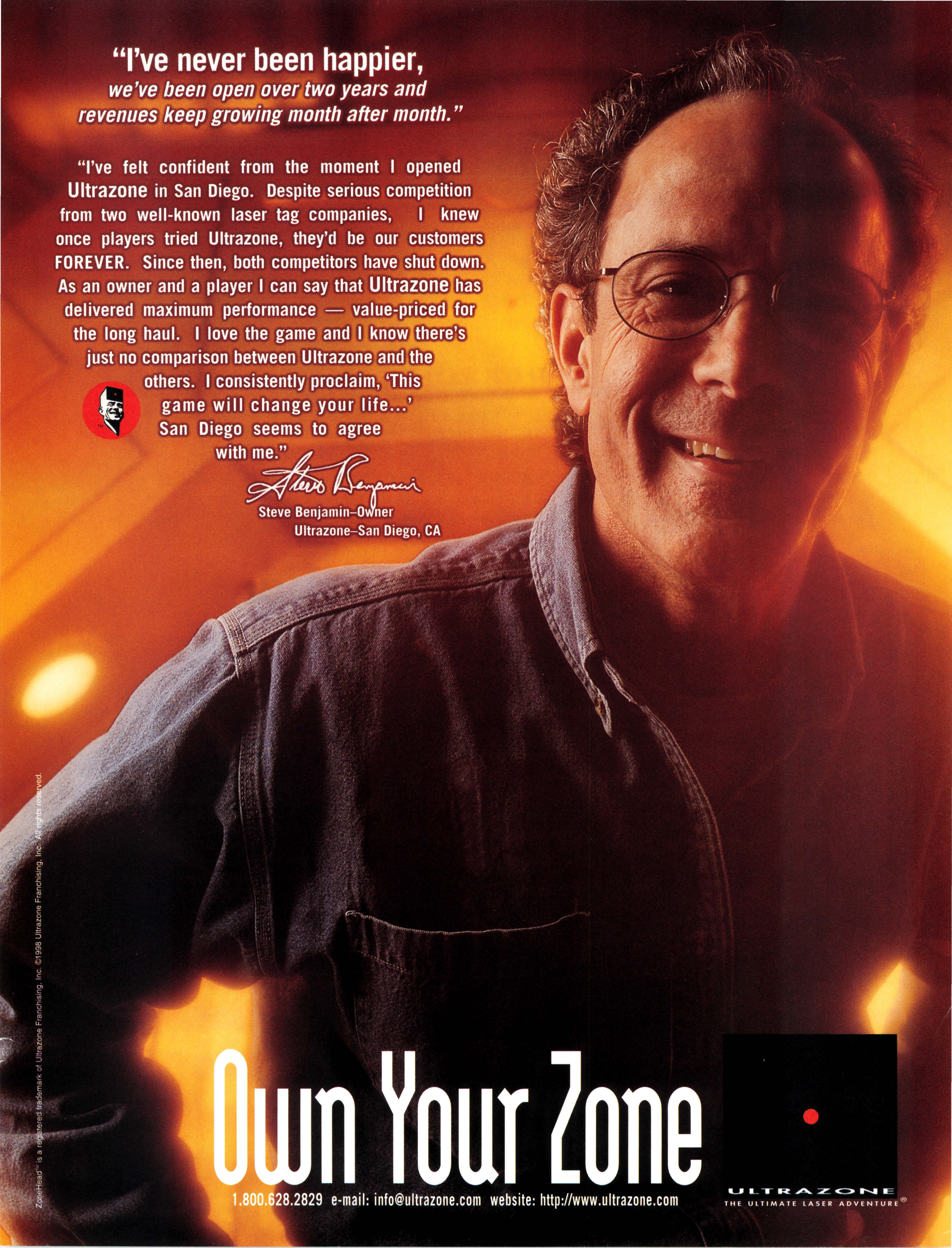

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Steve Benjamin

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1st STAGE
105 km/h

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Vic Fortenbach takes a close look at the coin guns found in redemption games from Planet Earth Sales.

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COVER

SNK is excited about the introduction of the second platform (fighting/adventure games) in its new Hyper Neo Geo 64-bit system, which officially debuted last month throughout North America. Popular characters such as Haohmaru (l) and Shiki (r) from the *Samurai Shodown* series appear in *Samurai Shodown 64*, the first title for the fighting/adventure games platform. SNK's other platforms are for driving games and gun games.

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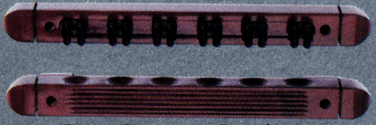

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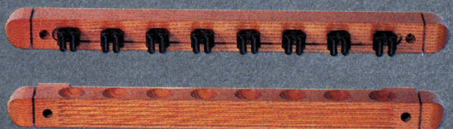

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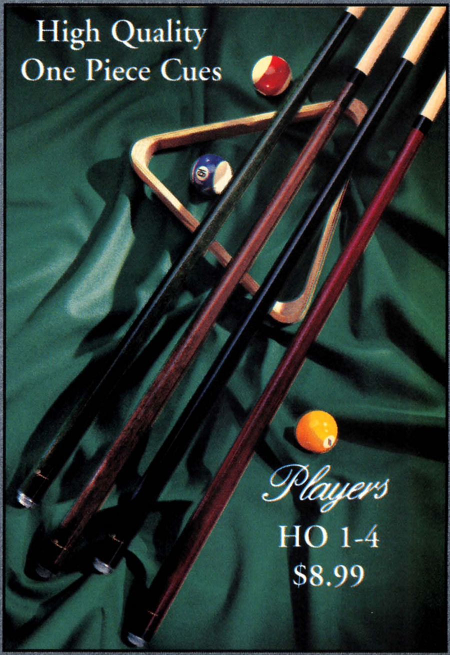

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FROM THE
EDITOR

We've hit the bottom and we're on our way to the top

I have been on the phone a little more than usual. The topic of the majority of the conversations is our recent State of the Industry Report (Jan. '98). Each year we expect a few calls for clarification of numbers, but this time the majority of the calls were to tell us we were right on the mark.

Ironically, that's not exactly good news. Why? The numbers show that the industry is shrinking. The numbers are frightening. Remember "The Incredible Shrinking Woman" with Lily Tomlin? She began shrinking until she was but a speck, and her family and friends began mourning her demise because they couldn't even see her.

Valerie Cognevich
Editor

Perhaps we've gotten to that speck point and many are, in fact, mourning our status. But during her family's grief, Lily Tomlin's character reappeared, not only back to normal but with all indications of becoming even larger than she had been before! Will our industry do the same? It's certainly possible.

When we gauge the industry by the manufacturers, naturally we think of the equipment in the field, how many have closed shop, and other things. It's hard to see our hero, Nolan Bushnell, sweep back into the industry proclaiming wonderful things, only to sink into obscurity. We take a collective sigh wondering whether anyone can save us. But then there are companies like I.C.E. that have taken on mega proportions and given us such an array of equipment, we feel a renewed confidence.

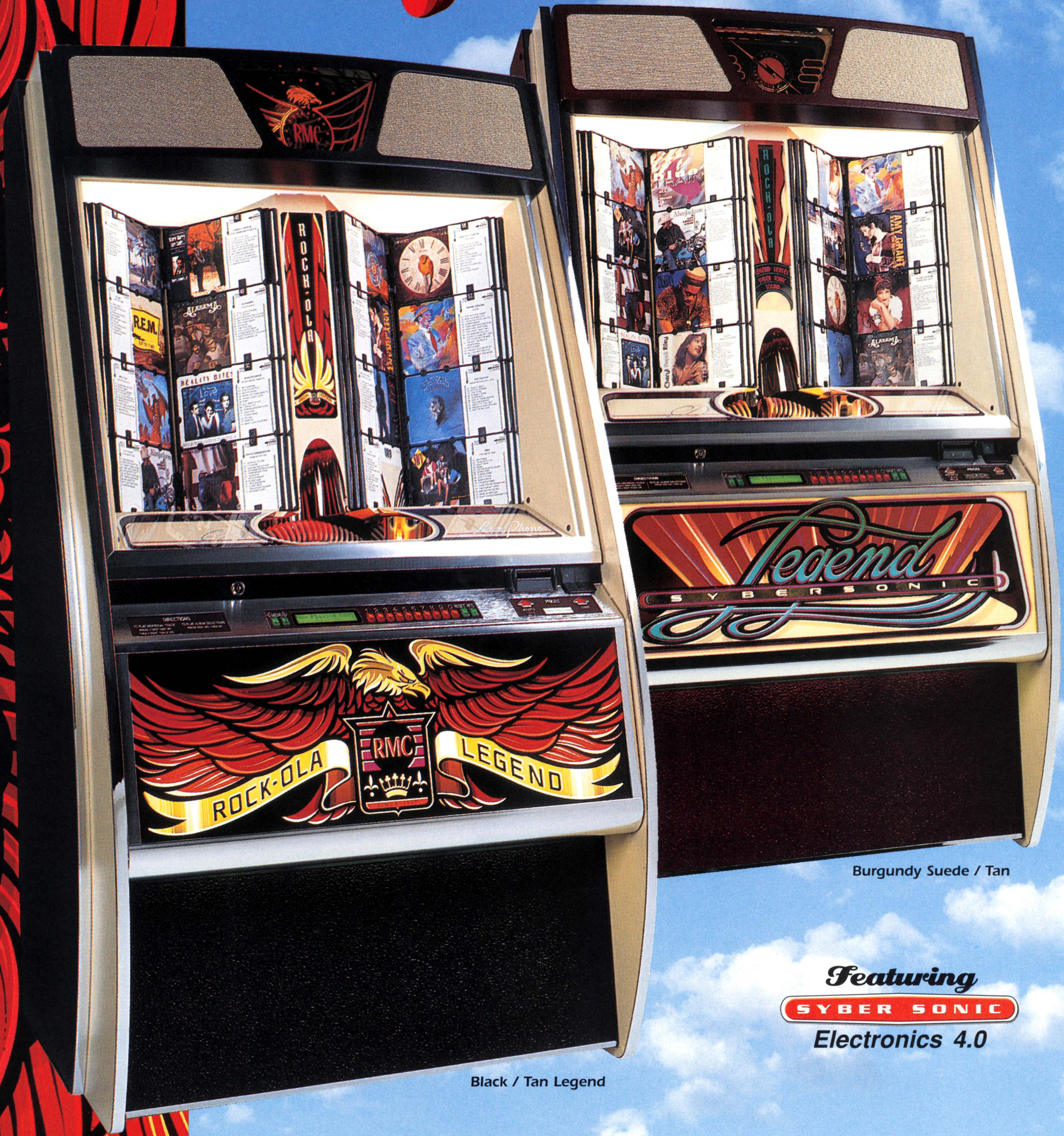
When viewing the industry through operators' eyes, perhaps we see something different. Yes, operators depend on new innovative equipment, but the good ones work with what they have. They don't need equipment from any one company, they just need equipment. It's not where it comes from that counts. One of their biggest complaints is the home market. While the home market has been dissected since Atari's 2600 in the early '80s, back then the chasm between the two was wide enough that the home experience was far inferior to arcade play. Today technology is raising all expectations. But as Vicki Sieben tells us in "Off the Record" in this issue, the standards are much lower when something is free. Think about that and read the rest of her thoughts.

When you talk with operators, sometimes it's a little surprising to hear such a positive outlook for our industry. Our Coinman this month, Dan Sunday, for example, reiterates what we've heard before, that our industry is marked by cycles. But he believes that we've hit the bottom of a cycle and are now on our way back up. He's not idealistic, he's practical. His business will live and die by his decisions, not by some ambiguous board of directors somewhere overseas like some manufacturers must endure.

When some at AMOA presented a proposal to invite manufacturer's representatives to join the board of directors, there was a resistance from within, much of it from past presidents. While their arguments against the plan were sound enough to convince the membership to vote it down, one point is paramount. The operators on the board own their businesses and every decision made is vital. There is no safety net. Manufacturers' representatives can risk more because of the company behind them. No one can believe that a manufacturer's representative could make a critical decision that would affect operators and their livelihoods with the same intensity, reasoning, and risk. It really doesn't make sense.

I think you'll be encouraged when you read what Dan has to say in his interview. He talks about his feelings and his business, but he seems to talk for many other operators. If he talks for other operators, then we should be encouraged about the future. ▲

The Thing *Legends* Are Made Of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VIDEO KITS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	NFL Blitz *(Midway)*	8.96	171	32.05
2.	Tekken 3 *(Namco)*	8.19	536	51.92
3.	Golden Tee '97 *(Incred. Tech.)*	7.96	406	48.08
4.	Area 51 *(Atari)*	7.87	1361	66.03
5.	Golden Tee 3D Golf *(Incred. Tech)*	7.43	1235	41.67
6.	Bust-A-Move Again *(Taito)*	7.31	548	8.33
7.	Marvel Heroes vs SF *(Capcom)*	7.30	176	33.97
8.	Police Trainer *(P&P)*	7.24	417	53.21
9.	Strikers 1945 Part 2 *(Worldwide)*	7.23	58	8.33
10.	Point Blank *(Namco)*	7.15	669	8.33
11.	Tournament Solitaire *(Dynamo)*	6.83	644	7.69
12.	Street Fighter EX *(Capcom)*	6.80	16	9.62
13.	X-Men vs. Street Fighter *(Capcom)*	6.78	333	43.59
14.	Egg Venture *(ICE)*	6.71	10	8.97
15.	World Class Bowling *(Incred. Tech.)*	6.65	341	16.67
16.	Strikers 1945 *(Worldwide)*	6.62	152	21.79
17.	Super Puzzle Fighter II *(Capcom)*	6.60	54	6.41
18.	Shuffleshot *(Incred. Tech.)*	6.58	*	7.69
19.	Tekken 2 *(Namco)*	6.54	1037	37.82
20.	Metal Slug *(SNK)*	6.38	418	39.10
21.	Die Hard Arcade *(Sega)*	6.32	422	35.90
22.	Beastorizer *(Namco)*	6.30	*	6.41
23.	Lethal Enforcers *(Konami)*	6.25	1618	48.72
24.	Raiden DX *(Fabtek)*	6.24	346	21.79
25.	Three *(Capcom)*	6.16	89	16.03
26.	Bust-A-Move *(SNK)*	6.15	483	42.31
27.	Super Sidekicks 3 *(SNK)*	6.13	73	5.13
28.	Raiden Fighters *(Fabtek)*	6.11	107	12.18
29.	Aero Fighters 3 *(SNK)*	6.10	65	12.82
30.	Raiden II *(Fabtek)*	6.05	785	26.92

VIDEO DEDICATED

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	House of the Dead *(Sega)*	8.52	460	19.87
2.	Tourn. 3D Golf *(Incred. Tech)*	8.08	582	32.05
3.	Maximum Force *(Atari)*	7.69	453	49.36
4.	Gun Blade NY *(Sega)*	7.44	776	10.26
5.	Virtual On *(Sega)*	7.00	151	10.90
6.	Mortal Kombat 4 *(Midway)--tie*	6.87	168	30.13
6.	Solitaire Challenge *(Dynamo)--tie*	6.87	1457	14.74
7.	Time Crisis *(Namco)*	6.59	948	18.59
8.	Virtua Fighter 3 *(Sega)*	6.31	154	10.26
9.	Virtua Cop 2 *(Sega)*	6.16	900	16.03
10.	Rampage World Tour *(Midway)*	5.94	80	21.15
11.	Killer Instinct 2 *(Midway)*	5.79	305	33.97
12.	Virtua Fighter 2 *(Sega)*	5.24	930	18.59
13.	Run and Gun 2 *(Konami)*	5.09	72	21.15

VIDEO SIMULATORS

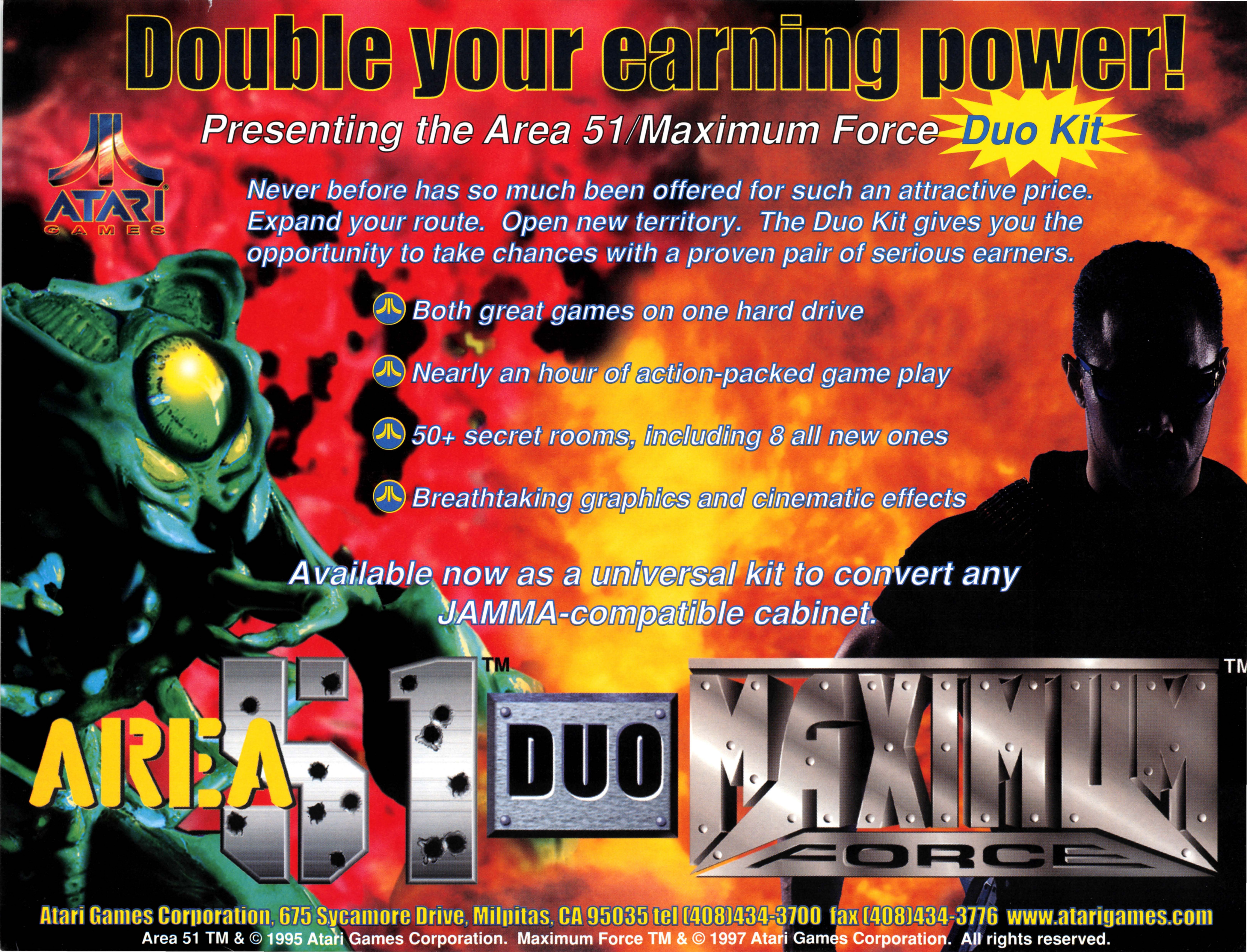
	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	The Lost World: J. Park *(Sega)*	9.24	178	10.90
2.	Top Skater *(Sega)*	9.23	417	14.10
3.	San Francisco Rush: Rock *(Atari)*	8.93	173	26.28
4.	Cruis'n World *(Midway)*	8.61	811	57.05
5.	Off Road Challenge *(Midway)*	8.18	260	25.64
6.	San Francisco Rush *(Atari)*	8.14	708	32.05
7.	Alpine Racer 2 *(Namco)*	8.03	585	18.59
8.	Cruis'n USA *(Midway)*	8.00	2205	57.69
9.	Wave Runner *(Sega)*	7.93	527	8.97
10.	Daytona USA Limited *(Sega)*	7.82	306	10.90
11.	Daytona USA *(Sega)*	7.70	2354	41.03
12.	Sega Super GT *(Sega)*	7.50	322	7.69
13.	Alpine Racer *(Namco)*	7.48	1268	16.03
14.	Alpine Surfer *(Namco)*	7.45	495	7.05
15.	Tokyo Wars *(Namco)*	7.00	322	11.54
16.	Aqua Jet *(Namco)*	6.89	408	5.77
17.	Suzuka 8 Hours 2 *(Namco)*	6.77	1546	22.44
18.	Cyber Cycles *(Namco)*	6.75	965	10.26
19.	Winding Heat *(Konami)*	6.67	193	5.77
20.	Manx TT *(Sega)*	6.64	597	14.10
21.	Wave Shark *(Konami)*	6.56	200	5.77
22.	Indy 500 Twin *(Sega)*	6.53	497	10.90
23.	Home Run Derby *(ICE)*	6.33	264	5.77
24.	OutRunners *(Sega)*	5.95	1774	12.18
25.	Lucky & Wild *(Namco)*	5.89	1346	12.18

What the numbers mean:

Point Value—An average of the ratings that operators give each game they circle (on a scale of 3-10) on their Equipment Poll ballots.

Longevity Points—Awarded after compiling a list of the top 60 videos and pinballs (combined) and compiling the top 60 redemption games (all categories combined). The #1 game gets 60 points, the #2 game gets 59 points, on down to the #60 game that gets 1 point. The higher the longevity points the better the "legs" of the game.

Percentage of Response—Amount of respondents who rated the games; another barometer of game success.



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Operators' Choice

REDEMPTION

ALLEY BOWLERS

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1. ICE Ball *(ICE)*	8.21	709	8.97
2. Smartball *(Smart)*	7.65	390	10.90
3. Bug Bash *(Bay Tek)*	7.63	610	5.13
4. Skee-Ball *(Skee-Ball)*	6.89	753	28.85
5. Skee-Ball Lightning *(Skee-Ball)*	6.67	979	9.62

SPORTS GAMES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1. Hoop Shot *(ICE)*	8.00	266	5.77
2. Full Court Fever *(ICE)*	7.56	729	10.26
3. Super Shot *(Skee-Ball)*	7.46	764	8.33
4. Shoot to Win *(Smart)*	7.00	631	19.23
5. Hoop It Up *(Atari)*	6.73	990	21.15
6. Full Court Frenzy *(ICE)*	6.52	443	21.15
7. UB-QB Football *(Skee-Ball)--tie*	5.82	127	17.95
7. Slugfest *(Williams)--tie*	5.82	7	21.15
8. Putting Challenge II *(ICE)*	5.45	51	7.05

SINGLE CRANES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1. Rainbow *(Rainbow)*	9.36	1033	8.97
2. Clean Sweep *(Smart)*	7.44	1011	33.33
3. Classic Watch Crane *(Smart)*	6.92	781	7.69
4. Big Choice *(Fun Merchants)*	6.86	724	17.95
5. Skill Crane *(Grayhound)*	6.44	392	11.54
6. Candy Crane *(Smart)*	6.33	487	33.33
7. Jumbo Crane *(Grayhound)*	5.92	687	7.69
8. Hollywood Crane *(Maxwell)*	5.88	128	10.26

CHILD-SIZE GAMES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1. Mini Dunx *(ICE)*	7.70	180	6.41
2. Shoot To Win! Jr. *(Smart)*	7.29	705	8.97
3. Smart Toss Em *(Smart)*	7.09	647	7.05
4. The Flintstones *(ICE)*	6.63	148	5.13
5. Hightops *(Skee-Ball)*	6.33	135	5.77
6. Feed Big Bertha *(Smart)*	5.96	309	17.31
7. Bozo Basketball *(Design Plus)*	5.90	98	6.41
8. Skee-Toss B.C. *(Skee-Ball)*	5.64	12	7.05
9. Awesome Toss 'Em *(Lazer-Tron)*	5.38	126	5.13

ROLL DOWNS

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1. Spin To Win *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.96	868	16.03
2. Rock N Roll *(Bay Tek)*	6.83	56	7.69
3. Jungle Rama *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.38	311	5.13
4. Clown Roll Down *(Bay Tek)*	6.07	185	8.97
5. Tic-Tac-Toe *(Skee-Ball)*	5.40	46	6.41

NOVELTY

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1. Cyclone *(ICE)*	9.12	1580	37.82
2. Surfin' Safari *(5 Star)*	8.82	381	7.05
3. Colorama *(Bromley)*	8.58	1172	7.69
4. Cyclone Jr. *(ICE)*	8.33	850	5.77
5. Dinoscore *(Planet Earth)*	7.82	1337	24.36
6. Pirate's Revenge *(5 Star)*	7.75	207	5.13
7. Treasure Falls *(Planet Earth)*	7.57	866	8.97
8. Prize Zone *(Lazer-Tron)*	7.07	281	9.62
9. Simple Simon *(Sammy USA)*	5.92	96	8.33
10. Hop-A-Tic-Tac-Toe *(Data East)*	5.64	46	17.95
11. Cosmo Gang *(Data East)*	5.47	2	10.90
12. Pop-A-Ball *(Coastal)*	5.43	84	14.74
13. Dump the Ump *(ICE)*	5.40	120	6.41
14. Hungry Hungry Hippos *(ICE)*	5.17	26	7.69
15. Pop-A-Tac-Toe *(Coastal)*	5.11	46	5.77

COIN DROP GAMES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1. Big Haul *(Benchmark)*	8.70	866	23.72
2. Smokin' Token *(Seidel)*	8.17	1309	18.59
3. Wheel 'M In *(Bromley)*	8.10	1231	18.59
4. Coin Circus *(Sammy USA)*	7.18	290	10.90
5. Super Bank It II *(Lazer-Tron)*	7.10	223	6.41
6. Cut the Cheese *(Sega)*	6.55	629	7.05
7. Aftershock *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.48	540	14.74
8. Rock-N-Bowl *(Bromley)*	6.36	489	21.15
9. Home Run Hitter *(CCI)*	6.05	563	12.18
10. Roll For Gold *(Benchmark)*	5.82	372	7.05
11. Screamin' Slopes *(Midway)*	5.78	273	5.77
12. Chicken Dash *(Konami)*	5.25	205	5.13

GUN GAMES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1. Knock-Down *(Meltec)*	6.57	116	8.97
2. Big Mouth *(Meltec)*	6.54	149	8.33

BOPPING/STOMPING GAMES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1. Spider Stompin *(Island)*	8.06	1105	10.26
2. Ribbit Racin *(Lazer-Tron)*	7.42	833	15.38
3. Cracky Crab *(Namco)*	7.00	203	5.77
4. Circus Hi-Rise *(Skee-Ball)*	6.88	231	5.13
5. Whac-A-Mole *(Bob's Space)*	6.85	170	8.33
6. Swamp Stomp *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.63	592	5.13
7. Wacky Gator *(Data East)*	6.58	462	24.36

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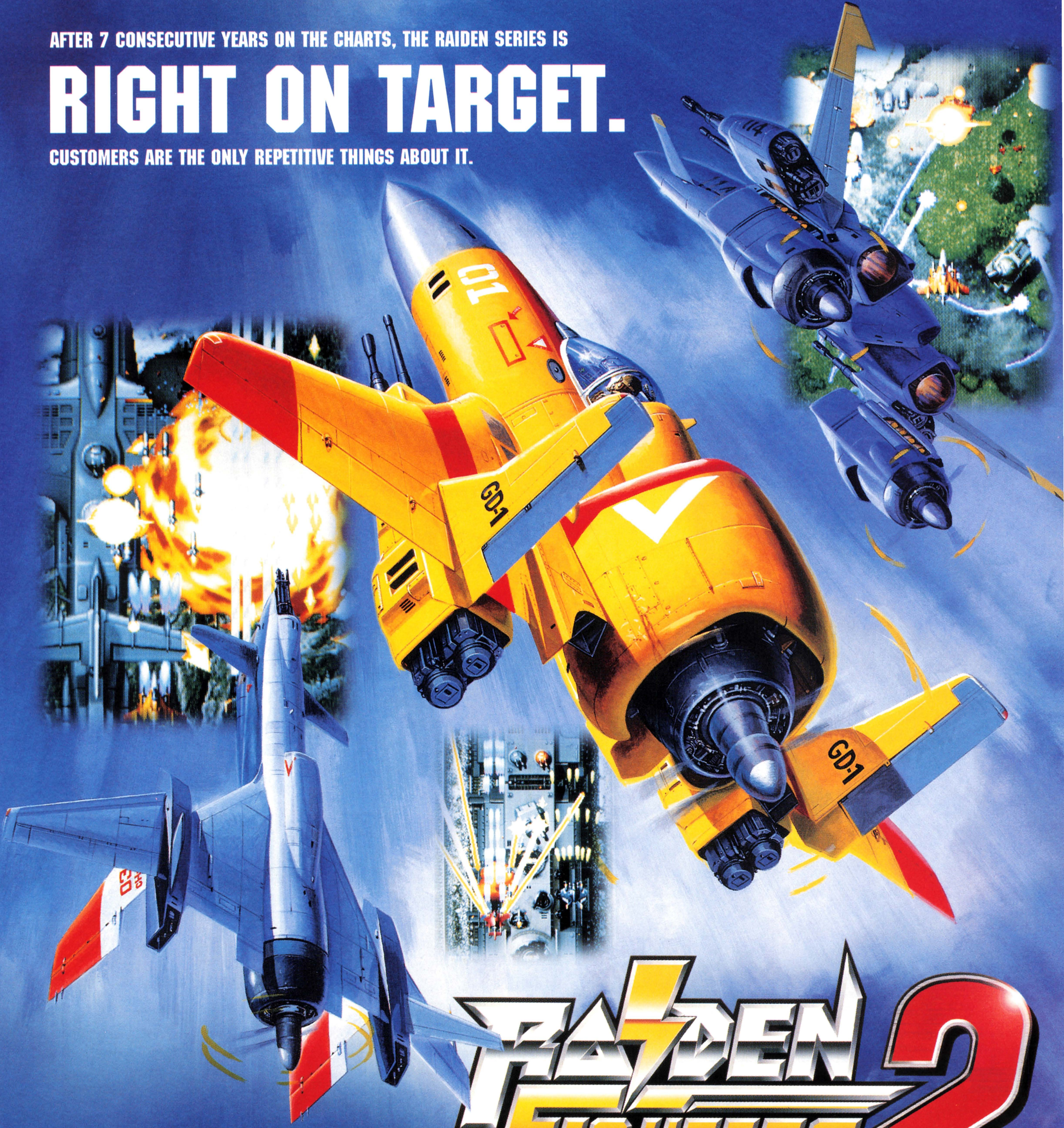

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PLAY METER

Operators' Choice

PINBALLS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Medieval Madness *(Williams)*	8.21	315	25.00
2.	Attack From Mars *(Bally)*	7.71	1067	31.41
3.	The Addams Family *(Bally)*	7.43	3473	48.08
4.	Theatre of Magic *(Bally)*	7.42	1309	37.82
5.	Scared Stiff *(Bally)*	7.27	667	28.21
6.	X-Files *(Sega)*	7.15	55	12.82
7.	Independence Day *(Sega)*	7.00	290	8.97
8.	Star Wars Trilogy *(Sega)*	6.82	175	17.95
9.	Star Trek: TNG *(Williams)*	6.66	1726	37.18
10.	Arabian Nights *(Williams)*	6.63	507	22.44
11.	Cirqus Voltaire *(Bally)*	6.54	32	8.33
12.	Junk Yard *(Williams)*	6.45	279	14.10
13.	Fast Break *(Bally)*	6.30	71	14.74
14.	The Lost World *(Sega)*	6.23	99	14.10
15.	World Cup Soccer *(Bally)*	6.20	1055	32.69

CLASSIC VIDEOS

1.	Pole Position *(Atari)*	6.32	*	35.90
2.	Out Run *(Sega)*	6.31	52	39.10
3.	Ms. Pac-Man *(Bally/Midway)*	6.21	*	71.15
4.	Galaga *(Bally/Midway)*	6.12	*	53.21
5.	Centipede *(Atari)*	5.82	*	39.74
6.	Raiden *(Fabtek)*	5.76	*	24.36

COUNTERTOPS

1.	Megatouch XL *(Merit)*	8.52	569	39.10
2.	Megatouch 5 *(Merit)*	7.97	256	25.64
3.	Megatouch Tournament *(Merit)*	7.67	694	13.46
4.	Megatouch IV *(Merit)*	7.52	1080	35.90
5.	Megatouch *(Merit)*	6.66	985	22.44
6.	Touchmaster *(Williams)*	6.63	605	17.31
7.	Magical Touch *(Micro)*	6.56	569	11.54

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

What is your most popular coin pusher?

#1 Jungle Jive (Coastal Amusements)
#2 Flippa Winna (ICE)
#3 Klondike (Fun Merchants)

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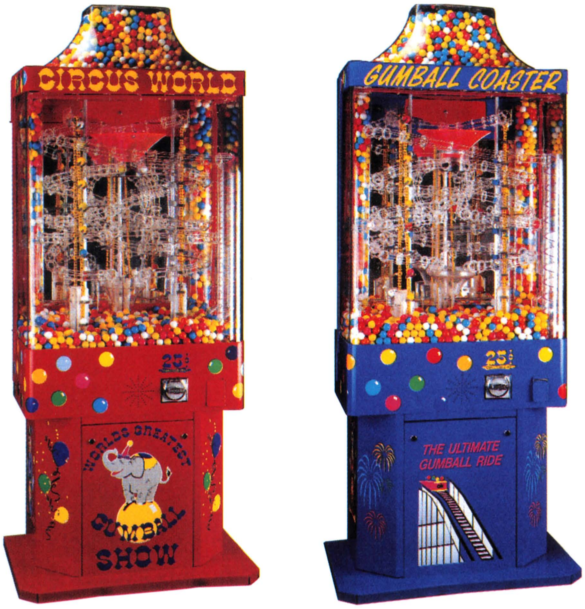
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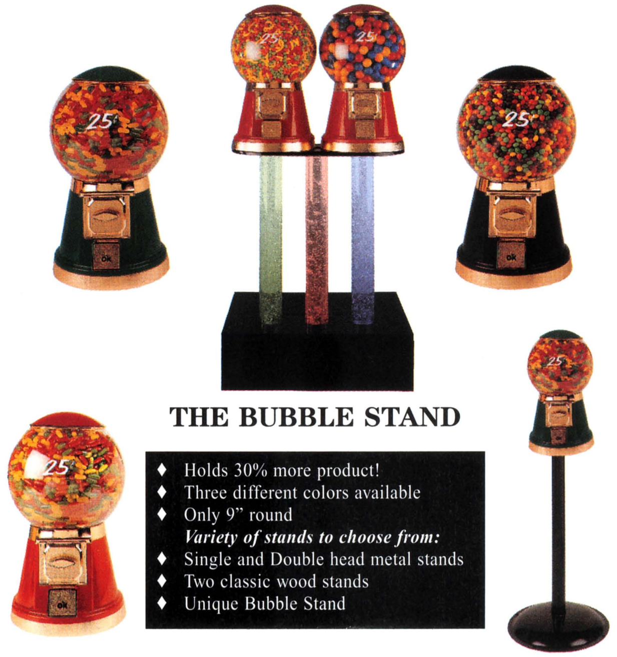

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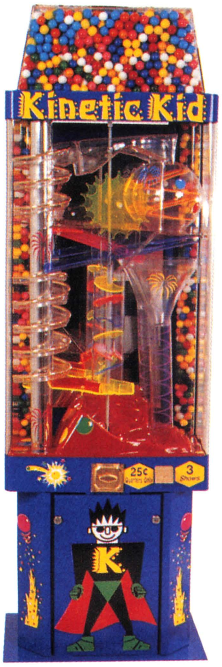
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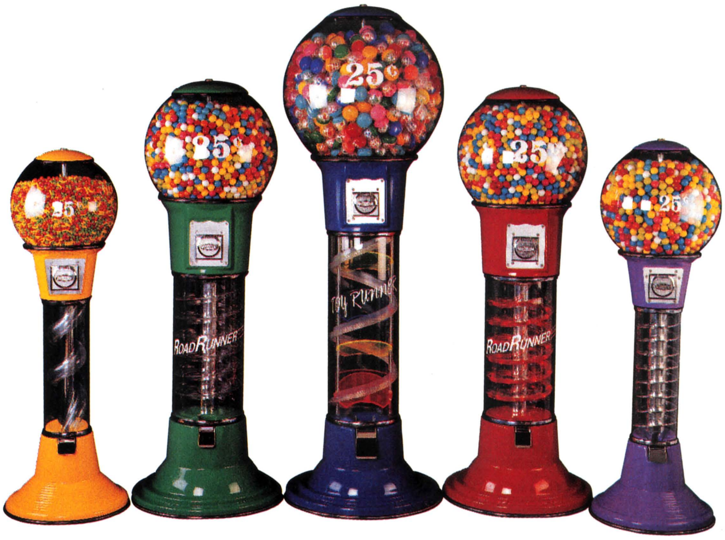
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UP FRONT

Now's the time to think Creatively

"Inside him was a little engine of ambition that knew no rest."

So said Bill Grady, staff writer for "The Times-Picayune" in New Orleans, in a profile of Harrison Glancy, age 93, the oldest living Olympic gold medal winner. Glancy competed in the 1924 Paris games and the 1928 Amsterdam games.

Glancy was modest about his accomplishments, and kind to fellow U.S. swim team members, saying, "Yeah, I won a couple gold medals each year. In the 800-meter relay I was the lead-off man. I gave 'em a two- or three-foot lead. Johnny Weismuller swam the last leg. Now, he was a great champion, a fella to give his best all the time."

We all have that little engine inside; it's what motivates us to keep pressing forward in the face of adversity. Call it survival. Our goals may not be as lofty as Olympic events; just hanging in there for the daily business grind and looking for the light at the end of the tunnel requires all our concentration and resources.

As our recent State of the Industry Survey indicates, these are tough times in the coin-op world. Feedback indicates that we are right on target with the assessment published. Consolidations are going on all around us in manufacturing, distributing, and operating. Remember when the government closed down all those military bases? We are not the only ones to find our ranks reduced.

According to the survey, major concerns for operators include the rising cost of games and declining revenues, government regulations, recruiting new customers, labor costs, lack of good street equipment at reasonable prices, and keeping up with competition and technological changes.

Survivors in this business have that same engine of ambition that kept Harrison Glancy at his Olympic best. They are rethinking their business approach and looking for ways to address their concerns. For some it will be adding new and/or different equipment; for others it might be beefing up service, planning promotions, or hosting tournaments—anything to increase traffic and satisfy customers in their locations.

It's amazing what a little cosmetic work can do in a facility—new flooring, signs out front and inside, super clean games and walls. And don't underestimate the impact of a friendly staff. Do whatever's necessary to set your locations apart from the competition. As one survey respondent said, "Update for freshness and maintain technical skills."

Thinking creatively and keeping that engine of ambition fueled is important, now more than ever. It's not the time to stop reinvesting, but rather a time for regrouping and charting a new course if you plan to weather the current slump. Sell off old games that have become friends like old suits that still hang in the back of the closet. Those suits won't help your current wardrobe and the dust-covered games in the warehouse won't help your bottom line.

Play Meter will continue to address operators' concerns, as always. Don't be surprised if in the near future you get a phone call asking for your opinion and suggestions.

We're all in this together. ▲

Bonnie Theard
Managing Editor

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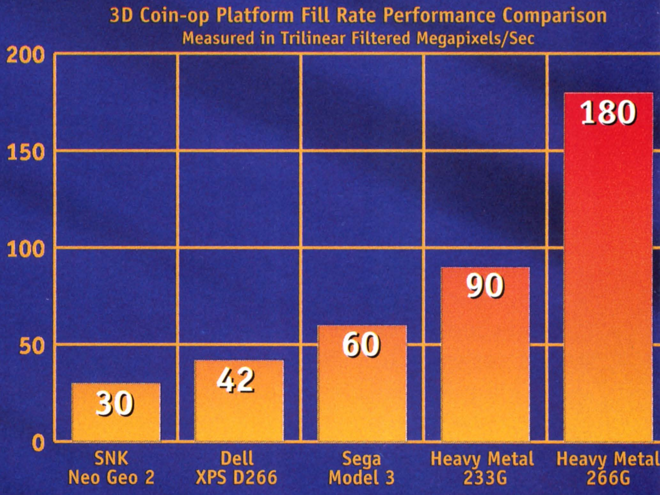

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JOE DILLON

"A true gentleman has passed. How lucky we were to have known him!"
—Donna Kordek

Joe was always willing to try anything! Here he is with Judith Martin decked out in a grass skirt to get into the spirit of the OCMA's tropical-themed party.

Here's Joe during his early days in the industry.

Here's the smile his friends knew so well.

Joe received many awards during his career. This one is presented to him by OCMA's Paul Corey.

Saturday was Valentine's Day, a time to share loving tributes to family and friends. It was also a day the coin machine industry suffered a monumental loss when Joseph Paul Dillon of Williams Bally/Midway died of a brain hemorrhage.

It would be so easy to fill up page after page of glowing praises from his many friends, but it's not what he would have wanted. He was a private person, always thinking of others even to the point of not letting them know how sick he really was. In the past few years, he'd had bypass surgery and a kidney removed and was always soon back at the office working harder than ever.

When we found out several months ago that he was sick, there was no reason to believe he wouldn't pop back better than ever. He talked of attending the ATEI show in London and checked in often at the office. He was anxious to get back to work. It wasn't to be.

Many of his Chicago area friends were stunned when they saw the obituary in the newspaper. One of those was Atlas' Jerry Marcus, who had known Joe for 27 years and worked with him about that many years ago at Seeburg. "Joe worked for an organ company called Gullbrasen which was later bought by Seeburg. Joe used to laugh when he talked of toting organs to various churches. Both Joe and his wife Ann were Chicagoans and they didn't like living in Massachusetts, where the Seeburg distributorship was located. But he was a devoted employee. I think Joe was the very last Seeburg employee!"

Another close friend, Ron Gold of Cleveland Coin, fondly recalled the sympathetic ear he always found in Joe. "I've never had a better friend. He had personal integrity and compassion. He would listen to anything you needed to talk about and was genuine in his concern. I can still see him sitting in my office with that face that just evoked understanding. This is a devastating, gut-wrenching loss."

Fellow Williams employee Steve Kordek had vivid memories of Joe's concern for helping charitable organizations. "Joe had so much compassion for people. Whenever a worthy group needed a game to raise much-needed money, Joe would tell me to donate a game to the cause. But even though he was devoted to his work, he always had time to talk about his family. He loved his family."

Rachel Davies, who worked closely with Joe, spoke at his funeral, focusing on Joe's simple philosophy that she called the three Ls: Live for each day; Love your family; and don't forget to Laugh. The stories Rachel shared, brought a tear to the eye while forcing a smile across the face. There was the time he decided to dress up like a leprechaun for St. Patrick's Day. "Joe, no one is going to believe you're a leprechaun," Rachel declared. "Maybe not," Joe replied with a twinkle in his eye, "but they certainly won't forget me!"

The industry certainly won't forget his participation in the late '80s and early '90s when the ACME show featured the "Firing Line" seminars. You could always depend on Joe to be on the panel ready with honest answers to tough questions.

Rachel noted that the industry lost perhaps its greatest mediator, explaining, "Joe was an exceptional leader, not because he could give orders, but because he cared so much about people. He knew what it took to motivate and encourage those who worked for him. It wasn't the tangible possessions in life that were important to Joe, it was the love of his family and friends that figured first and foremost."

A brokenhearted industry will be grieving along with the family he adored: wife Ann; sons Tim, Kellan, and Keith; and daughters Johanna and Elizabeth.

In the obituary, son Keith said Joe loved to tell stories of his travels throughout the United States, Asia, and European countries. Joe had a memorable journey; it just ended way too soon. The industry won't be the same without Joe.

In lieu of flowers the family has requested that you remember Joe through the Kidney Cancer Society, 1234 Sherman Ave., Suite 203, Evanston, IL 60202. ▲

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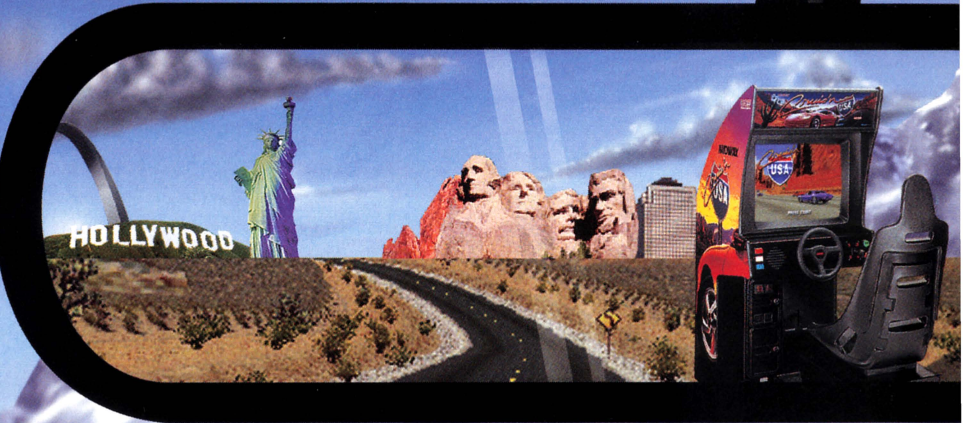

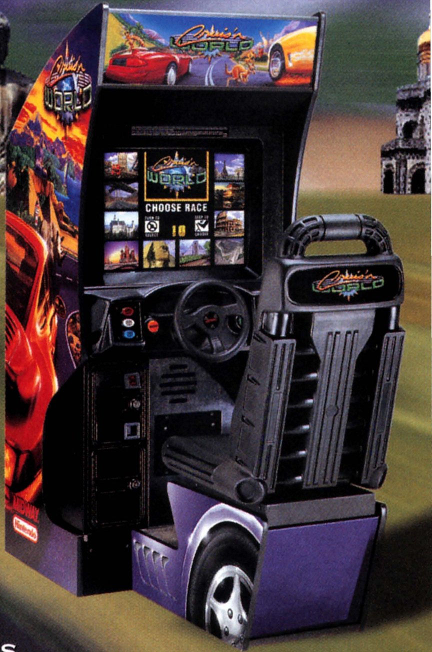

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COIN-OP NEWS

Namco Cybertainment files for bankruptcy reorganization

Bensenville, Ill.,-based Namco Cybertainment Inc. (NCI), the largest operator of amusement games in the United States, has filed a Chapter 11 reorganization case in the state of Delaware. The reorganization process will provide NCI with the opportunity and the tools to restructure existing leases in certain locations in order to operate properly, a company statement said.

Through predecessor entities including Bally's and Aladdin's Castle, NCI has been in business for over 25 years and currently operates 370 amusement centers, primarily in enclosed shopping malls. In addition, the company supplies games to 170 other locations under varied revenue sharing arrangements.

The dynamics of NCI's mall-based business, which historically generates approximately 85 percent of its revenue, have changed significantly over the last four years, according to the company's official statement.

"A large decline in mall traffic coupled with increased costs and entertainment competition have made the occupancy economics of many mall leases unworkable," the statement said. "Operating margins, which historically could sustain the high occupancy costs charged to mall amusement centers have significantly suffered and with them, NCI's profitability. We strongly believe, however, that the business remains viable at occupancy economics that more realistically reflect current market rates and revenue levels."

The company said it plans to address these issues quickly in order to emerge as a stronger operating company. Chapter 11 reorganization, according to at least one expert in the field, has become an attractive option for mall retailers faced with unmanageable overhead because lease negotiations do not require the full term or amount of an agreement to be honored under reorganization.

Florida bill goes after violent video content

Two state legislators in Florida have co-sponsored the Children's Protection From Violence Act which would ban anyone under 18 years old from viewing video games deemed violent.

According to *Next Generation Magazine,* the bill defines violence as "the depiction or representation of death or severe injury...in such a way that the depiction or representation shocks the conscience of the community and exceeds the boundaries of what should be tolerated in a civilized society."

AMOA vice president Rich Holley of Orlando, Fla., said the two legislators—Sen. John Grant and Rep. Barry Silver—sit on opposite sides of the political aisle and could muster enough bipartisan support to achieve passage of the bill.

Florida operators are currently staging an education campaign in the state capitol of Tallahassee, detailing industry efforts on a national level and pointing out the negative effect such a bill would have on many small business owners.

"This is so arbitrary it's ridiculous; nothing is mentioned about consumer console or PC titles," said Holley. "The state could adopt the national rating system, and then you would have to card everybody who walks into a location. That will not work."

Unfortunately, the Florida state association is struggling from a lack of funds to fight off the attack as well as another bill that could increase the number of state-run lottery vending machines. "It's paving the way for state-run, low-level or soft gaming and that will hurt all our businesses," Holley concluded.

AMOA gets good news on income forecasting

The Washington, D.C., accounting firm, which helped former AMOA president Craig Johnson achieve a private letter ruling that opened the door to using an income forecasting method of depreciation, has given operators the green light to continue using that method.

Deloitte & Touche agreed to contact the Internal Revenue Service as part of its research into whether recent tax laws negatively affected that ruling. That discussion produced good news for amusement game operators across the country.

"There are no changes concerning our industry," said AMOA first vice president Jim Stansfield, who spoke directly with the accounting firm. "The regulations haven't been written yet. However, all things being equal as in the past, we should be able to do income forecasting."

Stansfield said the accounting firm was planning to release a letter to operators and the trade press confirming this opinion. The letter was not available at press time. "In the end, my depreciation numbers are the same," added Stansfield. "It's just a truer picture and makes us better managers."

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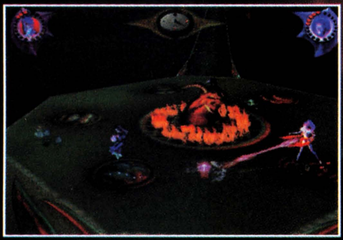

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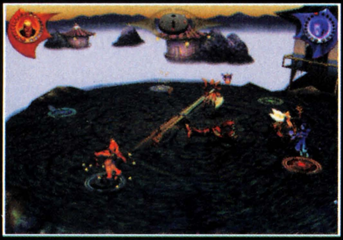

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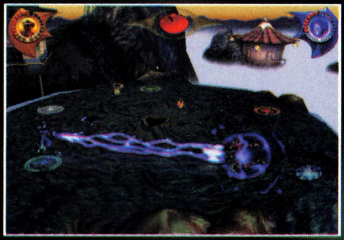
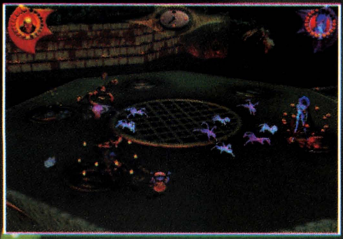


- No Rounds, just fight to the death.
- New genre creating far more tension than conventional fighting games requires blazing speed, reflexes, and precision to win.



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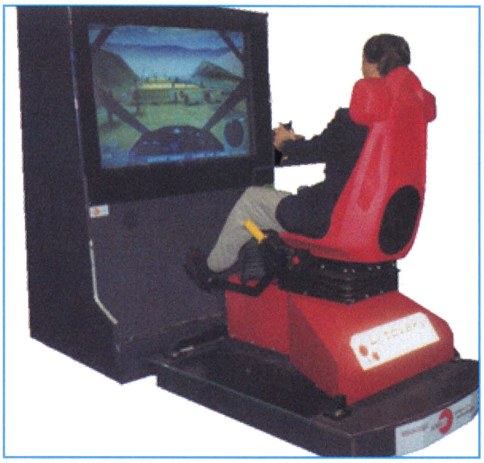
ARCADE PC NEWS

For more on the Arcade PC initiative, turn to this month's "Through the Looking Glass."

Letovsky Dynamics releases PC-based simulator games

Letovsky Dynamics, of Willits, Calif., will unveil the latest version of its series of universal video game motion simulators loaded with titles from Blue Byte Software, Electronic Arts, Psygnosis, and Namco at this month's ASI show. Market response was excellent to the initial versions shown at Fun Expo, AMOA, and IAAPA last year, according to company president Howard Letovsky.

The units will be on display in booth 1238 hosted by Advanced Manufacturing and Development. Letovsky Dynamics' Topgun Flyer and Road Rocket Driver are multiaxis motion simulators which work with any video game platform, dedicated arcade or PC, without any modification to the game hardware or software. They can also be retrofitted to existing arcade driving or flying games. The units interface to the game hardware through the JAMMA joystick and control switch inputs, or the PC gameport. The motion platforms provide an ultra-realistic simulation experience using proprietary direct-drive mechanical systems - without motors, hydraulics, or pneumatics.



Letovsky Dynamic will unveil the latest version of its series of universal video game motion simulators loaded with titles from Blue Byte Software, Electronic Arts, Psygnosis, and Namco at this month's ASI show

The Flyer gives riders a lighter than air experience with 30-degrees of pitch and roll motion in perfect sync with the video display. The Driver provides 24-inches of side to side motion. The units include vibration transducers to create force feedback effects, as well as a seat-mounted stereo sound system with a dual cone subwoofer in the rear area. Both simulators are marketed with either a 50-inch big screen display or an integrated 29-inch CRT, and sell for $4,000 to 10,000 depending on options, game hardware and software, and video display size.

As a member company of Intel's Open Arcade Initiative, Letovsky Dynamics has developed relationships with a number of cutting-edge software developers to offer a broad selection of PC-based flying and driving game titles.

"We are making certain that our customers will have an ongoing supply of content to justify their investment in our machines and the PC hardware,"

See ***Letovsky Dynamics*** **continued on page 25**

LBE Systems plans ASI SparkyNet system release

Location Based Entertainment Systems, which exhibited its PC-based SparkyNet system at AMOA `97, is planning to release the system along with its first title, id Software's home hit *Quake*, in the Intel booth at this month's ASI show in Las Vegas.

Company president John Fowler told *Play Meter* the system has been testing at all five Sega GameWorks location and showing steadily increased earnings. It will be released with a Pentium II 233 MHz PC using a Quantum3D graphics board. A final version will be placed on test at Namco's Wonder Park location in Milpitas, Calif.

According to Fowler, the SparkyNet system will be released as a standard upright, as well as deluxe sit-down unit, and the company is also working on at least one deluxe version for retail applications.

"The great thing about the PC platform is we will have a flow of some 12 titles over the course of the coming year with some of the best developers working on this," Fowler said, adding that several new titles as well as other content opportunities will be on display at this month's show.

The SparkyNet units can be linked together within a location, and networking from location to location "is part of the long-term strategy" at LBE Systems.

ARCADE PC NEWS

For more on the Arcade PC initiative, turn to this month's "Through the Looking Glass."

Letovsky Dynamics *continued from page 24*

Letovsky said. "Game cost will range from $250 to $500. Aside from simply generating income, an arcade is an ideal place to advertise games which are available for home purchase. If a kid hops into one of our simulators with a PC game on a 50-inch screen with full motion and vibration effects, not only is he going to throw money into the arcade, but he will also run out and buy the PC game too."

Blue Byte Software was the first to respond to a suggested arcade specification presented by Letovsky; the company has created an arcade version of its critically acclaimed attack helicopter PC simulator, *Extreme Assault,* to be unveiled at the ASI. Blue Byte's Beth Rodgers will be handling the arcade licensing of *Extreme Assault.*

Joan Wood, president of Mango Grits, has also stepped up to the plate, according to Letovsky, to bring the *Barrage* title to market with Letovsky. *Barrage* was previously released through a partnership with motion seat manufacturer Jesler Enterprises. Other companies planning to provide software include Leaping Lizards with its *Raider* game and Trilobyte Software with *Extreme Racing.*

To further insure that its customers will have access to video game content, Letovsky Dynamics, in conjunction with ACTLABS, is finalizing development of an interface board which will allow any PC game to be triggered and controlled with a coin or bill acceptor without any software modification or complicated programming. ACTLABS, based in Richmond, British Columbia, has been producing top-quality PC, Nintendo, and Playstation controllers for years. They are currently offering a Force Feedback multi-platform Steering Wheel and Foot Pedal system.

Advanced Manufacturing and Development, also located in Willits, Calif., is the exclusive manufacturer of Letovsky Dynamics' simulators. Their state-of-the art wood and steel fabrication facility covers over 400,000 square feet. AM&D currently produces the hit *Kick-It* soccer game for Interactive Light, and has produced high-end video games for Atari, Namco, SNK, and Sega. Ed Urich, General Manager of AM&D Interactive Technologies, is negotiating with several video game companies to provide them with Letovsky Dynamics simulators on an OEM basis.

Letovsky is reportedly looking to offer attractive leasing packages and coin drop splits, as well as full buyout options. In the early 1980's, the company's founder created a series of compact hydraulic, pneumatic, and electro-mechanical motion platforms called Hotseats. Letovsky also consulted on motion system development with Bally Sente, Exidy, Atari, Simultronix, and Kiddie Rides USA; designed and built motion platforms and cockpits for the 20th Century Fox movie "Project X;" built a motion system for MCA Universal Studios for its "Back To The Future" ride; designed a fighter trainer motion system for McDonnell Douglas; and built a cockpit simulator for NASA.

Acclaim arcade system aiming to set standard

With its newly released Arcade system, which is based on Intel's Open Arcade Architecture specification, Acclaim Coin-Op is hoping to set the standard for quality PC-based arcade games, the company's Leon Deith recently told *Play Meter.*

According to Deith, the system will be updateable with a continuing stream of titles provided by Acclaim designed to turn a profit for operators. "So it is not a matter of only Acclaim games that will run on this platform," said Deith. "It is more the fact that we want the operator to benefit from the best possible games for his business.

"The system is wide open for developers and is utilizing Windows 95 and the Intel Pentium processor. We are looking forward to working with as many quality developers that would like to write for coin-op and support the OAA initiative."

The idea of authentication, according to Acclaim, will satisfy developers' fears of copied games, distributors' concerns about being left out of the marketing and service loop, and the operators' need for quality product.

Deith said a standard set of hardware provided by Acclaim will ensure that "when there are add-ons they will be organized via us so that we know at each stage where our customers are because as technology advances the graphics boards will change as will the RAM increases, etc.

"The important factor here," he concluded, "is that we have to keep this system simple. The operator doesn't care if its PC or PCB as long as it makes money and is reliable."

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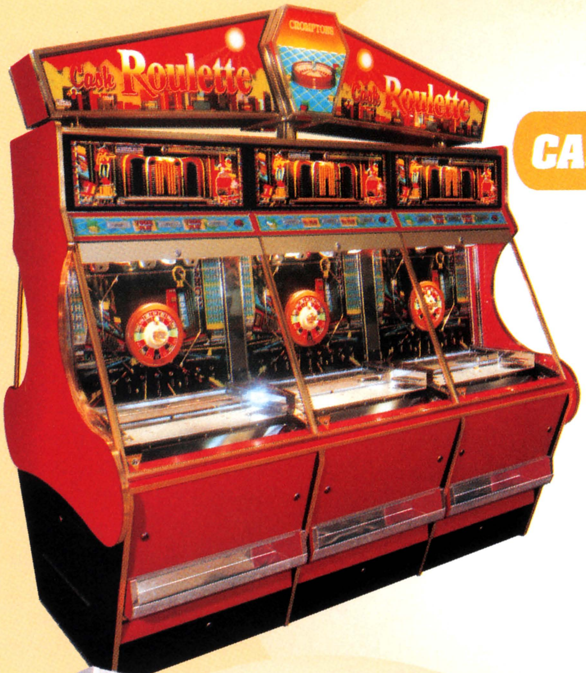
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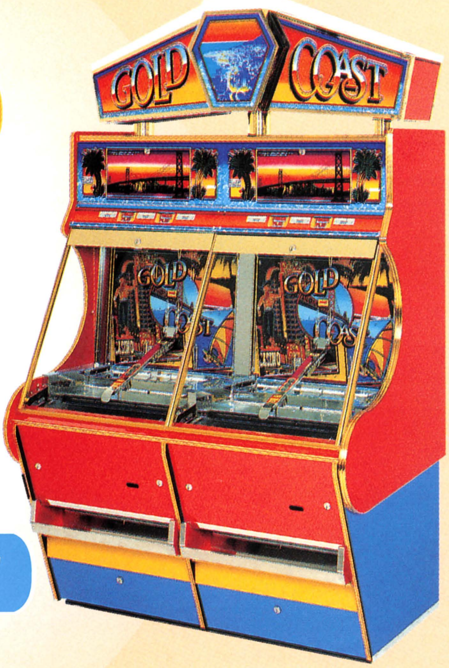
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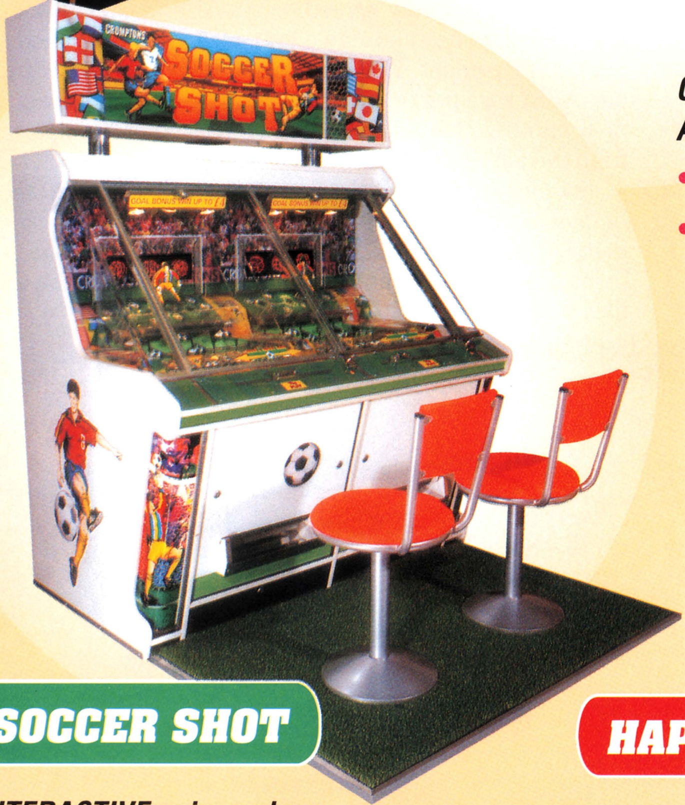
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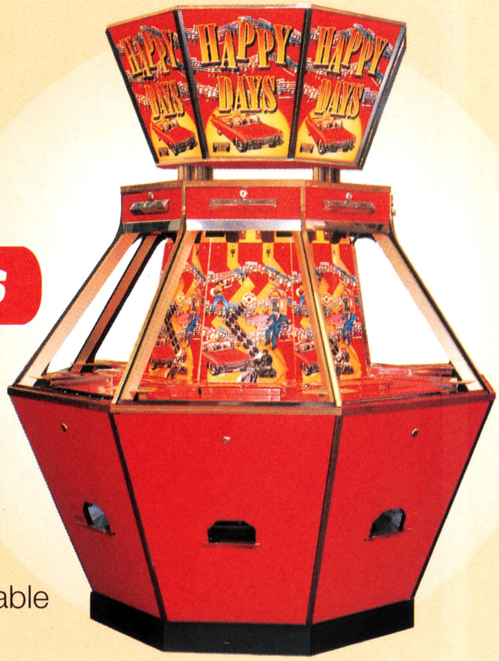
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Countersuits filed over photo sticker patents

American Photo Booths Inc. (APBI) and the SNK Corp. have both filed countersuits for patent infringement against Atlus Co. Ltd. of Japan and its United States subsidiary Atlus Dream Entertainment in a Los Angeles federal district court in late January.

Atlus Dream Entertainment had filed a previous lawsuit against APBI, maker of the *Sticker Station,* and SNK, which manufactures the *NeoPrint* photo sticker machine.

In the suit, Atlus claimed it acquired the patent to this cutting-edge technology through an exclusive license agreement with ImageWare Software and sought an injunction restraining APBI and SNK from manufacturing, selling, leasing, or distributing their photo booths, as well as substantial monetary damages.

In previous legal action, APBI settled a patent infringement lawsuit against SNK Corp. Under the settlement agreement, SNK reportedly agreed to pay APBI a "significant amount" of money and sign a non-exclusive license and settlement agreement. The agreement also called for SNK to pay APBI royalties on all past and future revenues from SNK photo sticker machines sold, operated in, or exported from the United States.

In other APBI news, the Sony Corp. will install *Sticker Station* machines in Sony-owned Loews theaters in metropolitan New York and New Jersey locations. Sony owns Loews theaters and is the majority holder in the Cineplex Odeon theater chain.

Intel set for ASI seminar

The question on many attendees minds when they arrive in Las Vegas at the Amusement Showcase International this month will be, "Where are all the new PC-based video games?" Computer chip manufacturer Intel, a giant in the PC industry, will be on hand with an answer.

Intel will sponsor a general seminar open to all showgoers on March 27 from 9:30 to 11 a.m., offering the latest information on the Open Arcade Architecture initiative. Three major consumer game publishers will give presentations regarding current and future projects as part of the seminar.

Those presentations will be followed by a panel discussion. To find out more about the details of the presentation and panelists' biographies, check out the Open Arcade Architecture Forum's Web site (http://www.openarcade.com).

On the show floor, Intel will showcase seven PC-based coin-op arcade products that are currently shipping. Other OAA products will be on display across the show floor for arcades as well as the location-based entertainment industry.

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Nightclub & Bar beat

Konami showed its new *Beatmania* music attraction, along with several other games, at the 23rd International Nightclub and Bar Convention and Trade Show in Las Vegas in late January. Other companies exhibiting their wares included: Atari, HanaHo, Merit, Midway, Namco, Sammy USA, and Williams. Representatives of AAMA and AMOA were also on hand. (Photo compliments of Konami America)

Texas law enforcement not targeting skill games

While Texas law enforcement officials have been given the go-ahead by the state liquor commission to enforce an attorney general's opinion declaring eight-liners illegal, the ruling will reportedly not be applied to skill or so-called fuzzy animal machines.

The attorney general's opinion also prompted members of the Amusement and Music Operators of Texas to file suit seeking relief from law enforcement. Attorneys representing the Texas operators did not return phone calls or declined comment when reached by phone. Look for more on the subject in next month's issue of *Play Meter*.

In a press release put out last month the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission said it would issue written warnings and allow alcohol beverage license holders the opportunity to remove a machine before any administrative action is taken. The minimum penalty is reportedly a 15-day license suspension or $2,250 fine. Liquor control officers will not confiscate machines unless directed to do so by local prosecutors.

One location in Dalworthington Gardens has already been closed down by local authorities, although an attorney representing the location, Lots of Vegas, had filed a motion for a temporary injunction at press time banning enforcement of the attorney general's opinion.

Video camera beams players up into new Vivid Holopod

The Vivid Group of Toronto, Ontario, known for its patented Video Gesture Control technology, recently introduced the company's newest offering, the Holopod, which lets players interact within a selection of virtual world destinations.

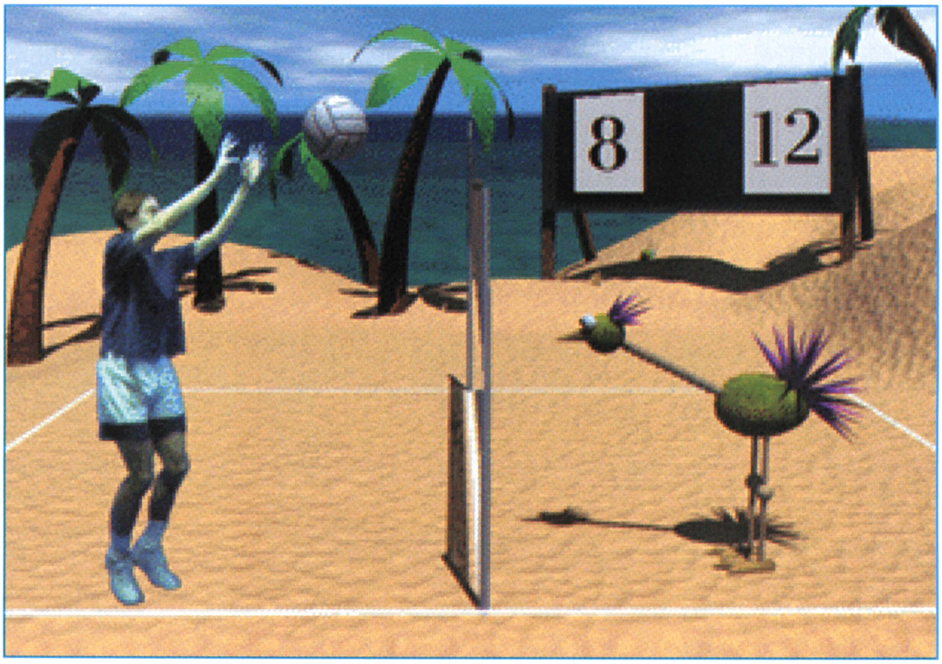
To get started, players step into the pod and select their experience before moving in front of a blue screen on which their image is then projected. Each player's image is scanned to determine body characteristics such as height, arm span, and length of reach.

Once the player's image appears on the screen, their chosen virtual environment quickly materializes around that image and they are ready to compete. As the player moves within the pod, they control the movement of their mirror image on the screen.

Experiences to choose from include such attractions as *Gravball*, a zero-gravity animated orbiting area where players jump, dive, and lunge around the screen in an attempt to bump the gravitron ball back and forth using their entire body. The game can be played by one or two competitors.

Other choices include but are not limited to *Virtual Volleyball* and *VR Netminder Soccer*. In *Virtual Volleyball*, one or two players set, spike, and bump their way through a volleyball match against each other or Spike, Vivid's cyber opponent. *VR Netminder Soccer* places customers in a large net where they must defend against lightning fast opponents.

For more information, contact the Vivid Group, (416)340-9290; fax (416)348-9809; Web site (http://www.vividgroup.com).



The Vivid Group of Toronto, Ontario, recently introduced its newest offering, the Holopod, which lets players interact within a selection of virtual worlds.

IAAPA celebrates 80th anniversary

The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) is marking its 80th year with a new logo and several new tools to keep members abreast of all the latest association information.

IAAPA's 80th anniversary logo was designed to commemorate the special birthday, and the association has invited all members to include it on letterhead, business cards, advertisements, etc., during the special year.

As part of its 80-year effort to provide ongoing help to amusement industry professionals, IAAPA has published its 1998 Product and Services Catalog and 1998 IAAPA Calendar of Events. The catalog, which is also available on floppy disk, is a complete guide with pictures and descriptions of all that IAAPA has to offer its members.

The calendar is a colorful and useful reference complete with all the dates, places, events, and activities for this year. For more information, contact IAAPA, (703)836-4800; fax (703)836-4801; e-mail (iaapa@iaapa.org).

Setting records

Rock-Ola Manufacturing reportedly set a new company record in 1997, recording sales growth of 36 percent over the previous year. "The new Syber-Sonic electronics system, a proprietary technology developed by Rock-Ola, has performed very well," said president Glenn Streeter. "We are looking forward to setting new records in 1998 with the introduction of new products and enhancements to current technology."

Lazer-Tron introduces new video redemption system

Pleasanton, Calif.,-based redemption game manufacturer Lazer-Tron has introduced its Video Redemption System that will allow operators to install new CD ROM updates in the future. The introductory unit will offer six different titles, although operators may purchase a VRS cabinet with only one game installed.

VRS system cabinets will feature the following controls: joysticks, push-buttons, trackballs, guns, steering wheels, and more. The unit will include ticket dispenser, coupon printer, a Pentium-level computer with 16 megs of RAM, full 640 x 480 resolution, 27-inch high-resolution VGA monitor, and 16-bit stereo sound. Initial games available are:

Solar Spin: players attempt to stop a spinning light on the Jackpot slot in order to win the progressive bonus or one of the larger prizes programmed into the Insta-Prize feature.

Hoppin' Harry: the challenge of this new game is to navigate frogs across a raging river using strategically placed lily pads.

Prize Bowl: a one- or two-player bowling simulator with bonuses available for the player using maximum speed and spin on the ball.

Chip Away: players attempt to drop colored chips from their claw into the pile of chips below. If the player links up three chips of the same color, the chips will disappear. When all the chips disappear, the player moves onto the next level.

Slide Master: a new-style skill-stop where players get three attempts to stop the sliding box on the three 7s to win the bonus jackpot.

Miner's Revenge (not available until June): Lazer-Tron's popular two-player redemption shooting game.

Vice president of marketing Matt Kelly said new games will be released for the system on a regular basis. "Our game designers have become very good at creating outstanding new ways to entertain players," he said. "With the variety of controls available to be used on the new VRS, we have already made a list of over 30 games for future releases."

The system will begin shipping next month. For more information, contact Lazer-Tron, (510)460-0873l; fax (510)460-0365.

Streak Technology builds Trip2 simulator for Brainco

Streak Technology, one of the premier contract manufacturers and system integrators for the coin-op industry, recently completed construction on the Trip2 simulator for Brainco, which debuted at ATEI.

The motion-based Trip2 represents a revolutionary approach to the out-of-home entertainment market, featuring interchangeable software experiences in both ride and interactive configurations.

For more information, contact Streak Technology, (408)432-1613; fax (408)432-3062; e-mail (info@streak-technology.com); or turn to this month's "Through the Looking Glass" column.

Stricor Inc. introduces boat racing attraction

Stricor Inc., the Atlanta-based company that introduced the one-player interactive motion simulator *Xtreme Voodoo* at last year's Fun Expo, will introduce its second software title later this year, *Xtreme Power Boat Racing*.

The game challenges players to get behind the wheel of a powerful racing boat, and the unit simulates the undulations and rolls of a speed boat. Company president Young Kim said the title was in beta testing and should be released during the second quarter.

"We are trying to get the timing right with the PC game publisher so that we may gain the benefits of doing a co-launch of a home PC title with, for lack of a better word, an arcade title," Kim told *Play Meter*. "I believe this will be a first in the industry. Since it is a racing game, two or more simulators will be linked."

According to Kim, this second title will demonstrate to operators that a high-end simulator system can be upgraded in a cost effective manner by leveraging market forces and technology from the consumer PC industry.

NASCAR Cafe taps Thomson for simulator

The newest NASCAR Cafe location in Nashville, Tenn., recently took delivery of Thomson Entertainment's Venturer V14, and the company is currently developing a special ride with Thomson based on in-car racing footage from the NASCAR Saloon series on ESPN.

NASCAR Cafe's Myrtle Beach, S.C., location installed an identical Thomson simulator last year. "From what NASCAR Cafe has told us about the simulator in Myrtle Beach, it has already become a profitable and popular feature of the restaurant concept which could be rolled out across locations throughout the United States," Thomson general manager Claude Bozzo said.

As activity gears up for the summer season across Europe, Bozzo said he was pleased to see strong continued interest in the Venturer mid-range products following the sales of a 19-seat simulator to Bonori of Italy, as well as 14-seaters to Proton and a German customer.

Recent exhibition debuts at Interschau `98 and ATEI have also drawn additional orders for the company's new two-seat Venturer S1 interactive unit, Bozzo added, notably for venues in Greece, France, South Africa, and Norway.

For more information, contact Thomson, +44 (0)1293 563533; fax +44 (0)1293 563388; e-mail (gw-entertain@ttsl.co.uk).

Tobacco talks

AMOA representatives, as well as operators from across the country, converged on Washington, D.C., Feb. 24-25, to discuss the fate of a possible buyout of cigarette vending machines as part of an overall national tobacco settlement. In addition to visiting Congressional representatives on Capitol Hill, attendees received a briefing from AMOA lobbyist Wayne Vallis, pictured here at a recent meeting with Ohio cigarette vendors. Also on the agenda to speak were AMOA tobacco committee chairmen Terry Davis and Mark Levine.

Louisiana operator wins legal countertop victory

Louisiana operators who wanted to operate the card-based amusement game Solitaire have finally won a long battle to do so following a recent approval letter from the state attorney general's office on the matter.

The letter was achieved as a result of tireless efforts by New Orleans area operator and distributor Jack Boasberg of New Orleans Novelty, who has been working toward the goal since the fall of 1995 when state officials forced exhibitors at the AMOA Expo in New Orleans to shut down card-based amusement games.

In late January, Boasberg received a letter from assistant attorney general Thomas Warner, who serves as the deputy director of the gaming division. The letter said: "There are no statutory or regulatory provisions prohibiting the play of Solitaire on devices which are not classified as slot machines" under Louisiana law.

"This ruling should help all of us in the pay per play amusement business who want to sell or operate the many versions of video Solitaire now on the market," Boasberg commented after receiving the letter.

Investment group buys interest in Hot Hits

An investment group headed by Courtlandt Miller and Thomas P. Haughney has bought an interest in Hot Hits, the seven-year-old company known for the compilation and marketing of multiple artist CDs to jukebox operators and professional DJs.

Haughney, who will take over as president, said the sale by one of the company founders (Alcy B. "Shug" Baggott) "assures that Hot Hits will retain its dominant position in its CD-compilation niche and at the same time have the resources it needs to follow new trends in popular music well into the next century."

Hot Hits produces six CDs on a regular schedule with Country topping the list at one release per month. R & B, Adult Contemporary, Rock, Pop, and Pop Dance come out once every six weeks. Specialty categories are issued periodically. Each CD includes 14 current top tunes in its category.

Image Dynamics to handle *Print Club* expansion

Image Dynamics LLC, a company that is 26 percent owned by Irata, has signed an agreement with international trading company ITOCHU to test market, install, and operate the *Print Club* photo sticker machine in U.S. and Canadian markets.

Print Club is designed and developed by Atlus in Japan and manufactured by Sega. Atlus has successfully marketed and distributed over 20,000 photo sticker machines in Japan; ITOCHU has been selected by Atlus as its primary trading partner for establishing U.S. distribution.

Lance Wimmer, CEO of Irata and Image Dynamics, said, "The Japanese phenomenon is just landing in the United States. In another year I predict we will see sticker machines everywhere."

Image Dynamics is expected to place 1,000 machines within the next year. The company has an extensive photo entertainment vending route service network and is equipped to service all *Print Club* machines in the field. For more details, contact Image Dynamics, (972)606-1940; fax (972)606-0661; e-mail (110112.1534@compuserve.com).

Side Pockets co-owners Keith Robinson (l) and Richard Hawkins.

Side Pockets chain aims to change pool image

A new franchise billiards concept launched in a suburb of Kansas City plans to reshape the image of the unsavory pool hall of the past. The brainchild of two experienced players, Keith Robinson and Richard Hawkins, Side Pockets Inc. was founded in 1994, two years before the International Olympic Committee recognized pool as a potential Olympic sport.

The timing may be right for broadening the appeal of billiards, which is the fifth most popular participatory sport behind bowling, basketball, camping, and fresh water fishing, according to the Billiard & Bowling Institute of America.

The first upscale Side Pockets billiard parlor opened last fall catering to accomplished and novice pool players looking for a classy atmosphere, quality food, a full-service bar, and opportunities for league and tournament play. It also offers full-size professional billiards tables and coin-op tables, darts, pinball, a pro shop, and more.

For more information, contact Side Pockets Franchise Systems, (913)888-pool or Web site (http://www.sidepockets.com).

Amusement Consultants/Smiles impacts Las Vegas game scene

Coin-op games have gone up another notch in Las Vegas, Nev., with the addition of two game rooms at major hotel complexes, Caesars Palace and Harrah's, compliments of Amusement Consultants Ltd./Smiles Amusement Co. LLC.

At Caesar's the game area is the Garden of Games and features 50 video and redemption pieces with an accompanying redemption counter; at Harrah's there are 110 games at the Jester's Court of Games and a larger redemption counter. Managers for the facilities are Wayne Getlan and Robert Ahearn.

Amusement Consultants/Smiles is no stranger to Las Vegas, having been responsible for the Skybound Arcade at the Stratosphere and the impressive Coney Island Emporium at the New York-New York.

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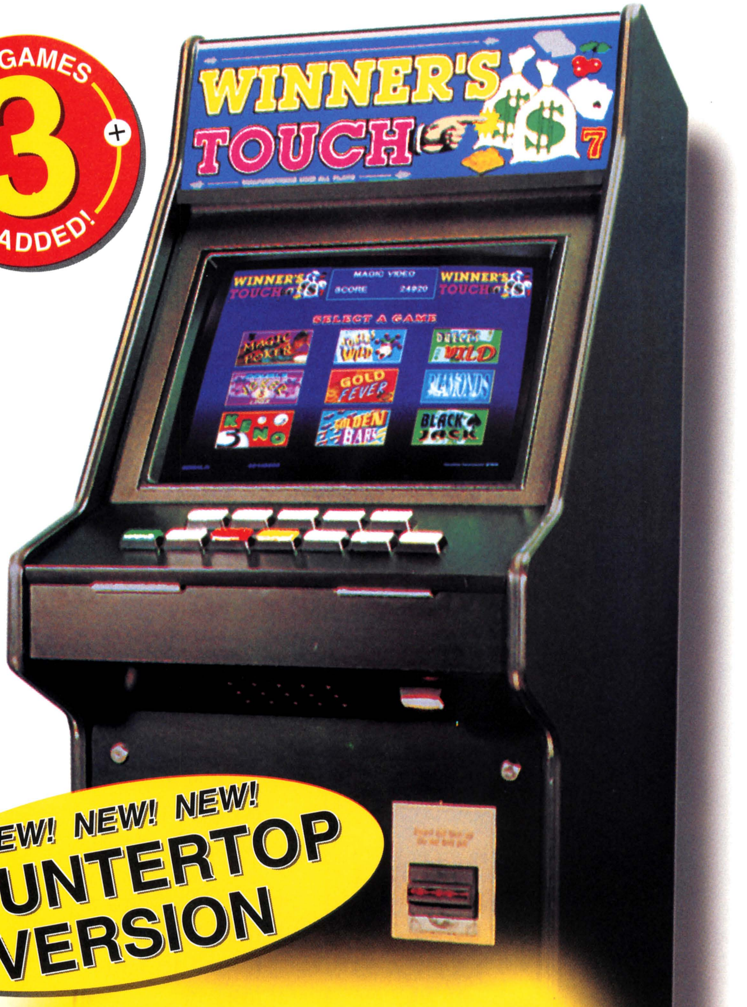

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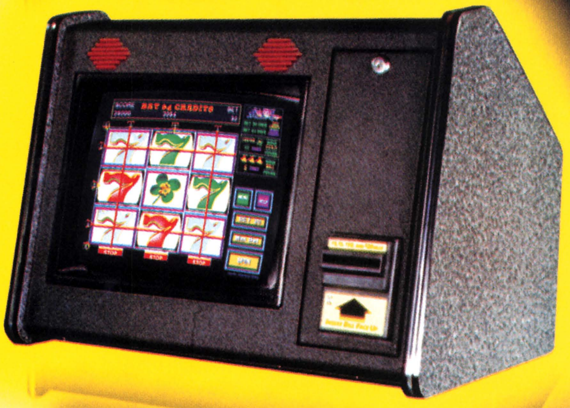

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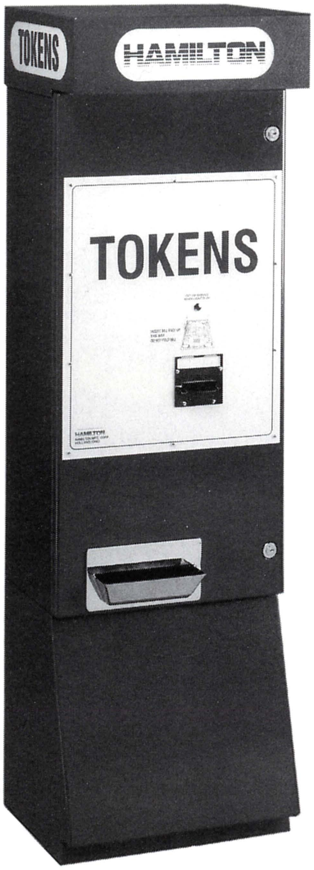

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ICE in full production with its new line of crane games

Innovative Concepts in Entertainment (ICE) is in full production of its new line of crane games, introduced at IAAPA `97, with the *Plush Bus* and *Sports Bus.* Company president Ralph Coppola said ICE believes there is still a large untapped crane market in the United States as well as overseas.

"We decided back in early 1997 that we were going to revolutionize the crane and with that decision we dedicated our research and development staff to this cause for the better part of last year," he said. "Not only is it the first all-metal crane, but furthermore we believe we have created not only the best crane mechanism and electronics but also the most user-friendly crane in the industry."

The new line of cranes features 14-gauge steel construction, epoxy powder-coated cabinets that can be customized to any location's colors or theme, rear prize door that allows for full-front plush display, revolutionary micro-track harnessing, and a crane assembly that can be removed or installed in less than 30 seconds with no tools.

ICE has already customized several models and has expressed its willingness to do this for any of its customers. "The fact that we have such a diversified product line, combined with our in-house fabrication company and wood shop, allows us to customize at a very reasonable rate," said Coppola. "We can do custom sounds, colors, logos, graphics, marquees, etc.

For more information, or to receive a copy of ICE's booklet "67 Reasons to Buy *Plush Bus* or *Sports Bus,*" contact the company, (716)759-0370; fax (716)759-0390.

Incredible Technologies set for second Golden Tee championship

Excitement is building quickly as the second Incredible Technologies ITS Live Championship Playoffs draw near at this month's ASI in Las Vegas, March 27-28.

Thirty-six players have been chosen to compete for the cash prizes totaling over $45,000. The players are the top six scorers from each of the six geographic ITS regions: Illinois, Nebraska, Central, Northeastern, Southeastern, and Western.

First place is $10,000, and all players who compete are guaranteed a minimum of $500. Trophies, certificates, and other items will also be awarded at the end of the competition, which gets underway at noon on March 27.

The first round will consist of six six-man regional playoffs with players from each region playing twosomes on an 18-hole tournament course. The two best scores from each region will advance to round two.

The three top players from round two will continue to the final round, one threesome playing on a final tournament course. The best score from this round will take the first place prize. Second and third place will also be determined by the scores from this round.

For more information, contact Incredible Technologies, (847)870-7027; fax (847)870-0120; Web site (http://www.itsgames.com).

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Quantum3D announces newest version of game control interface

Quantum3D has developed a second-generation Game Control Interface (CGI) for PC-based coin-op, kiosk, and location-based entertainment applications, the company announced at the ATEI show in London.

This newest version of the company's CGI provides a low-cost subsystem designed to interface coin-op and industrial output/input control devices with PCs that run Microsoft Windows 95, Windows NT, or DOS. Compliant with the JAMMA standard for coin-op, the CGI is also a reference-level hardware specification in the current version of Intel's Open Arcade Architecture platform.

According to Quantum3D, the CGI allows both arcade and consumer game developers to design video games for out-of-home venues without worrying about the specific electrical, mechanical, and software aspects of input/output devices. The new CGI reportedly features an improved form factor that simplifies PC integration, as well as enhanced hardware and software capabilities that improve system responsiveness while increasing the numbers and types of controls that may be supported concurrently.

The new version of CGI includes support for Microsoft DirectInput—the input component of Microsoft DirectX. This new software capability will further enable PC game developers targeting Windows 95 to bring their consumer level games to the coin-op markets and develop for out-of-home and consumer markets simultaneously, a crucial factor for development firms and software publishers.

"This new CGI reflects design requirements that we've received from coin-op, LBE, and visual simulation developers worldwide over the last 12 months," said Quantum3D's vice president of marketing and sales Ross Smith. "The reception that we have received from the development community is very positive and we believe that this new CGI will further reinforce our success in the coin-op, LBE, and visual simulation markets."

For developers, Quantum3D has developed a CGI Developers Kit that provides a comprehensive development environment including everything required to create a new PC-based application with coin-op input/output devices or to add coin-op controls to an existing application.

Designed to support development under DOS or Windows, the kit includes a CGI with internal PC mounting cable assemblies and brackets, the CGI to JAMMA adapter, DirectInput and GCL driver software binaries, test programs, wiring harness design guide, and a Quantum3D Gameframe.

Actually a family of real-time input development stations that enable developers to prototype the look and feel of their final game, the Gameframe series was designed for Quantum3D by Streak Technology, a leading manufacturer of arcade game systems. Gameframe provides developers with arcade-style layouts of Happ Controls player and coin-mech controls configured in a transportable module. Configurations offered include driving, flying, and two-player first-person perspective games.

"Quantum3D's games control interface will speed up development time," said HanaHo ArcadePC producer Matt Wasnick. "The enhanced CGI will allow developers to utilize credit and input/output information with a variety of devices on our ArcadePC systems."

For more information, contact Quantum3D, (408)919-9999; fax (408)919-9980; Web site (http://www.quantum3d.com).

ADA offers up more than $50,000 in prizes

Over $50,000 in prize money and trophies will be awarded to American Darters Association (ADA) members throughout 1998 at the ADA's Regional Championship Series, according to association president Glenn Remick.

"This series continues to grow with the ADA," reported Remick. "We experienced an increase in both new franchise areas and members in 1997 and early indications reveal an increase in our 1998 spring leagues."

Regional events include Men's, Women's, and Draw Doubles; Men's and Women's Singles; and Mixed Triples. The team events are Crickets and the Singles are 301 and 501. As in league play, all darts thrown are recorded to establish points per dart averages for the contestants. At the end of each regional, the computer software establishes a most valuable player.

Valley *IQ* and *Cougar* 8s, the only machines to include the ADA's Neutralizer Handicap System, will be the official dart machine for both the ADA Regional and National Championships.

Regional events are scheduled for Newark, N.J., (March 13-15); Denver, Colo., (March 20-22); Daytona Beach, Fla., (Sept. 24-26); as well as Memphis, Tenn.; Dallas, Texas; Springfield, Mass.; and St. Louis, Mo. The dates of those events have not yet been determined. For more information, contact the ADA; (888)327-8752; Web site (http://www.adadarters.com).

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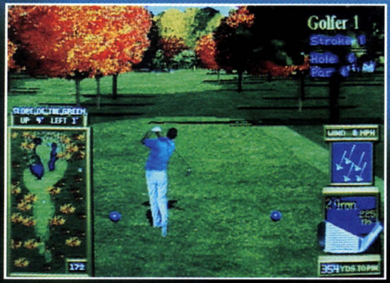
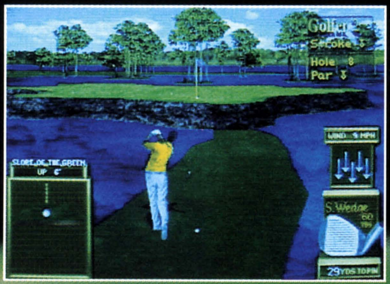
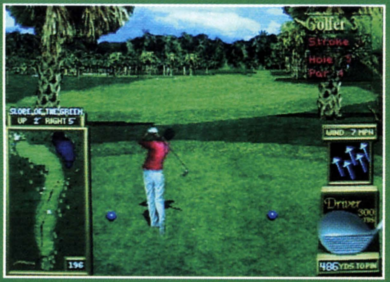

Golfer 1
Stroke
Hole
Par
SLOPE OF THE GREEN UP 4' LEFT 1'
WIND 6 MPH
2 Iron
354 YDS TO PIN

Bayou Bend
Swampy Louisiana Marshes


Golfer
Stroke
Hole 8
Par 3
SLOPE OF THE GREEN UP 6'
WIND 5 MPH
S. Wedge
29 YDS TO PIN

Palm Grove
Lush Hawaiian Tropics


Golfer 3
Stroke
Hole
Par
SLOPE OF THE GREEN UP 2' RIGHT 5'
WIND 2 MPH
Driver
486 YDS TO PIN

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Century Club celebrates 10th anniversary at ASI

Ten years ago, at the American Coin Machine Expo in Reno, Nev., a small group of industry veterans gathered for the first meeting of the Half Century Club (now the Century Club) to share remembrances and enjoy each other's company. The meeting grew into a tradition at every spring show (now Amusement Showcase International) and AMOA in the fall.

Conceived by Steve Kordek and Al Rodstein (who was named president), the original sponsors were Bob Jones, Louis Boasberg, Si Redd, Hank Tronick, Stan Harris, Bob Breither, Hank Grant (representing his father Sol), Joel Kleiman, and Sol Lipkin.

Veterans with 25 years in the coin-op business are invited to attend the 10th anniversary meeeting of the club at the Sands Expo Center; check for time and room at the show. For more information, call Kordek, (773)961-1548; fax (773)961-1010.

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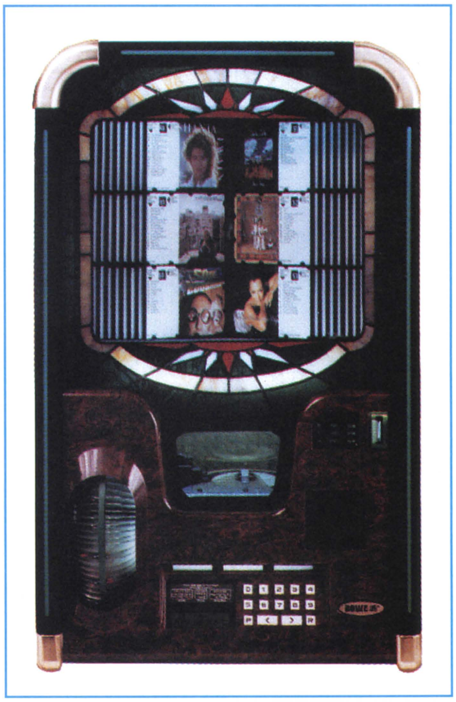
Rowe debuts the *LaserStar Berkeley*

Rowe International introduced the new *LaserStar Berkeley* wall-mount jukebox and *Berkeley* wall-mount companion selector for remote operation at the recent ATEI '98 in London, England. While designed for the United Kingdom pub market, the Berkeley will have worldwide applications.

This marked the first time Rowe debuted a new jukebox series in Europe since the *Model J-80-H* by Jensen IMA-AMi in 1957.

It also was the occasion to announce Rowe's True Dimension Sound technology as an Innovations '98 Award winner at January's 1998 International Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. The TDS technology is featured in the *Berkeley*, which has the look of stained glass in a burled walnut cabinet accented with 22-karat gold-plated trim, vine green neon lighting, and double animation. The new Philips CD PRO player is included, and the jukebox will be equipped for CDV, karaoke, and infrared remote control.



Rowe's ***Berkeley*** **wall-mount CD jukebox with TDS technology debuted at ATEI in England.**

According to David Sadler, CEO of Rowe, "TDS is possibly the greatest innovation in sound since Dolby Stereo and will add a new dimension to our products." TDS was used to enhance the sound track of the movie "Jerry Maguire" and is being used to enhance the sound tracks of other feature films, original and remastered CD recordings, as well as live broadcasts on radio stations.

Rowe executive vice president Joel Friedman commented, "TDS makes a dramatic improvement that far exceeds any competitive unit or sound reproduction system. This will be the sound of the 21st century." Friedman stated that all *Starlight, Storm,* and *Berkeley* series jukeboxes will feature TDS at no increase in cost.

TDS's roots can be traced to the development of a sound enhancement device with an application to dramatically improve nuclear submarine sonar signals. TDS restores the harmonic loss that occurs during the recording and playback process of an audio signal. The system is a hard-wired passive inductive circuit employing no resistors, capacitors, or active elements, and is the purist mode of restoring and recapturing sound.

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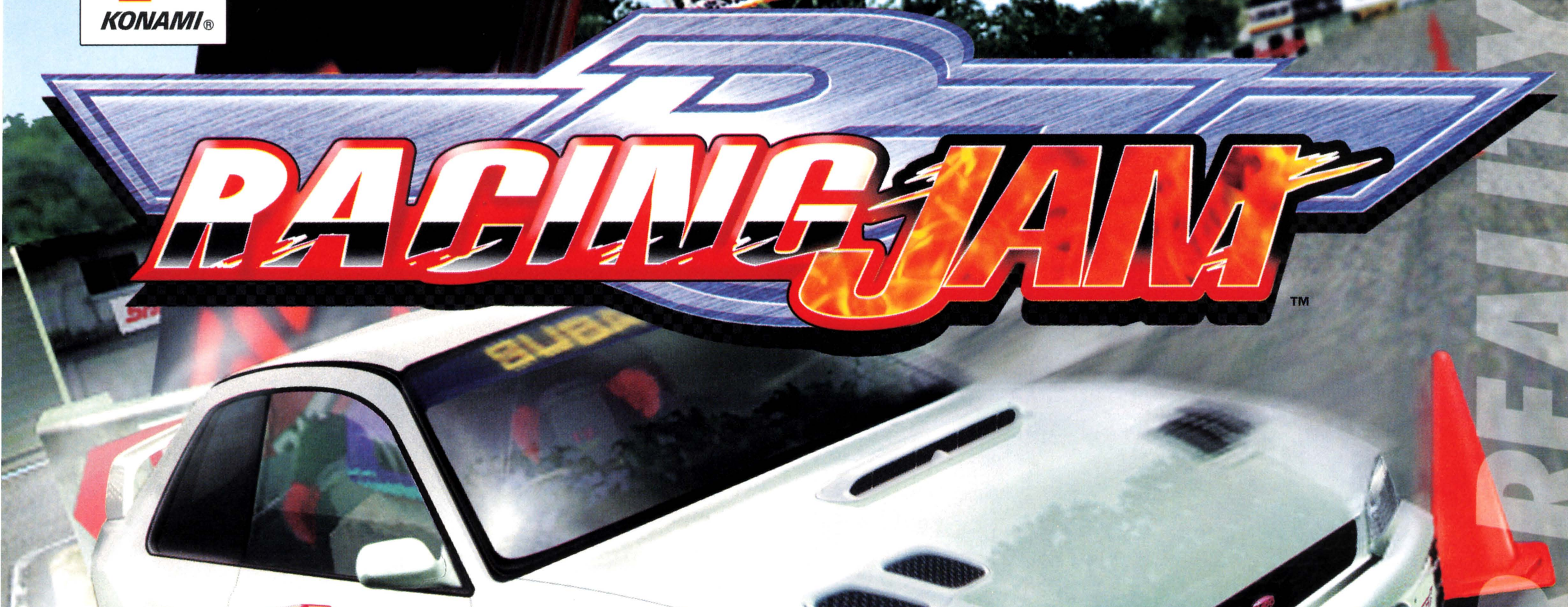
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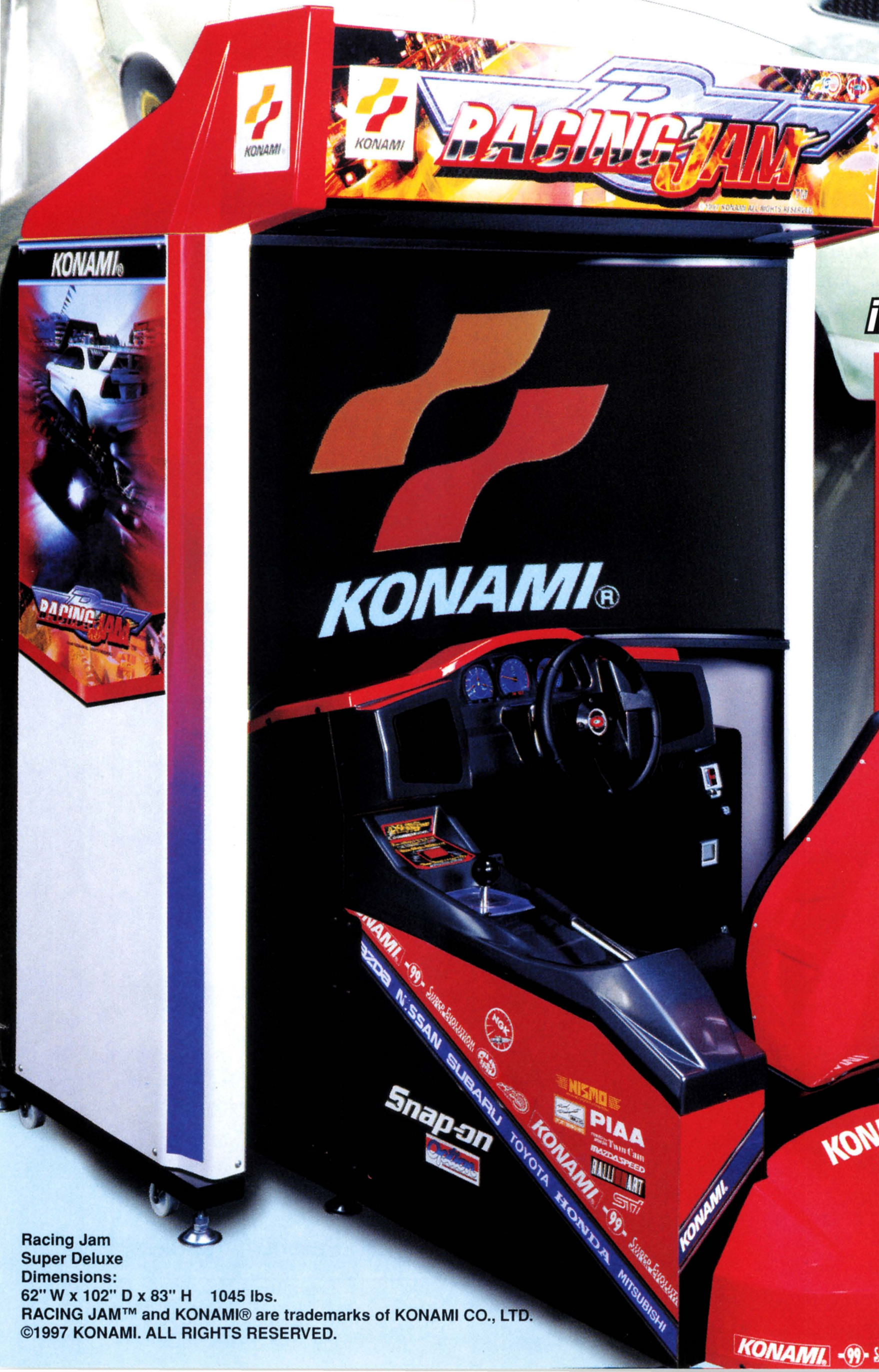
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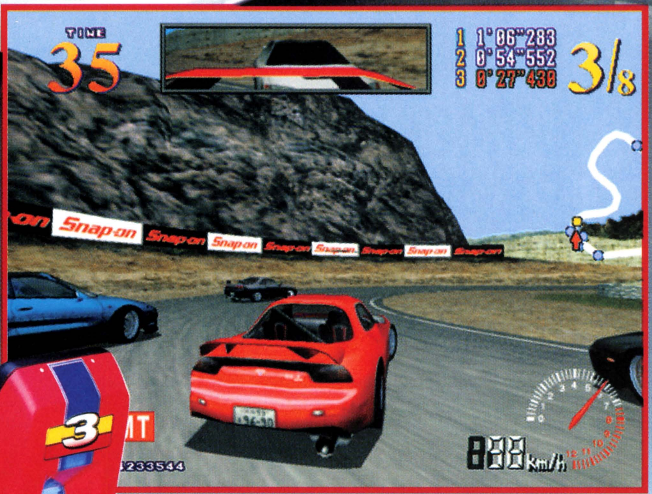
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Capcom releases 21st CPSII System video

Capcom Coin-Op recently announced the release of its latest video game title, *Marvel vs. Capcom* (Clash of the Super Heroes), the 21st in the five-year history of the popular and successful CPSII System.

Marvel vs. Capcom features a lineup of more than 20 of the most famous super heroes of all time. Legendary characters such as Spider-Man, Wolverine, and Captain America lead the Marvel titans into combat against Capcom heroes such as Mega Man, Captain Commando, and Strider Hiryu.

A CPS II System kit, the game offers these classic characters as well as eye-popping graphics combined with unique game features such as controlling two heroes at the same time and unlimited hyper-combos sure to keep the players' interest.

In other Capcom news, Rita Rokos has left the company to join Creative Electronics and Software Inc. as a sales representative. Customer service representatives at Capcom are Lisa Jones, (408)522-5330; and Mary Beth Suhr, (408)522-5325.

Video technical support questions can be directed to Hugo Chinchilla, (408)522-5356; and further assistance with customer service is being handled by operations manager Peggy Zumwalt, who has assumed responsibilities for both areas. Zumwalt can be reached at (408)522-5327.

Play-By-Play signs deal for Disney in U.K. and Ireland

Play-By-Play Toys & Novelties UK, a subsidiary of Play-By-Play Toys & Novelties, has signed an agreement with the Walt Disney Co.'s subsidiary, Walt Disney UK, to distribute its plush product line in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Disney's plush product for Europe is manufactured by Trudi.

The agreement, according to Play-By-Play, is expected to generate sales in excess of $5 million in the first year. Under the terms of the agreement, Play-By-Play UK will distribute Trudi's extensive line of Disney plush to retail markets in the two countries.

"With the addition of this distribution agreement, we now have the rights to distribute Trudi's high-quality Disney plush product to the U.K, Ireland, Spain, and Portugal," said Play-By-Play Europe's president Francisco Saez. "We are quickly becoming the dominant player in the burgeoning European market with our wide range of product lines."

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.80¢ (5-10")	57.60	115.20	1.25 (7-14")	90.00	180.00
.85¢ (5-11")	61.20	122.40	1.50 (7"-14")	108.00	216.00
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1998
"NATIONAL
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CEMA member Robert Ulrich (l) presents award certificate for the *Princess* to Dave Peckels of the Wurlitzer Jukebox Co.

Wurlitzer's *Princess* honored at CES

Wurlitzer's *Princess* jukebox was selected a 1998 Innovations Award winner at the recent Consumer Electronics Show honors program. The *Princess* is a scaled-down version of Wurlitzer's famous *Model 1015* with its rotating color cylinders and percolating bubbles.

Features include a durable, walnut-finished cabinet for 120 CDs; a 200-watt amplifier; coin mech; and dollar bill acceptor with 400-bills stacker. It fits most wall-mount brackets already in the field.

Said Joe Pankus, president of Wurlitzer: "We designed and priced the *Princess* so that an operator has the nostalgic look many locations increasingly prefer, needs only a small space, and still provides an equipment payback period that is active."

Triton honors Access Cash

Triton Systems Inc., one of the leading manufacturers of cash-dispensing Automated Teller Machines for off-the-bank-premises, has named Access Cash its Distributor of the Year for the second consecutive year ('96 and '97).

Access Cash provides hardware, software, statement information, national and regional network access, dial-up communication, and 24-hour customer service. It has been distributing Triton products since 1995.

In other Triton news, the company has added two regional sales representatives to help independent distributors make deployment of ATMs fast and simple. James W. Lumadue Jr. comes on board as sales manager for the Northeast; Elizabeth R. McCarthy will handle the Southeast. They will be responsible for product training and technical and sales support in their respective territories.

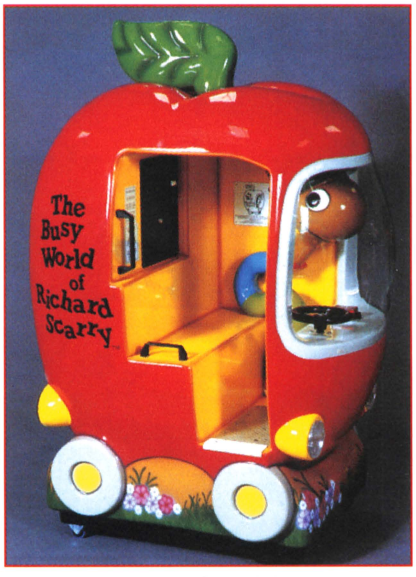
NKRA presents kiddie ride awards

For the second straight year licensed kiddie rides have dominated four of the six kiddie ride categories in the annual Equipment Poll of the National Kiddie Ride Association. While many new kiddie rides were introduced in 1997, the licensed kiddie ride market saw the most new releases.

According to NKRA vice president Bill Chiles, the introduction of licensed kiddie rides a few years ago was not embraced by every operator. Now almost half of the association's members operate some licensed rides and the number continues to grow each year. These rides have produced revenue numbers that were never seen by kiddie ride operators, but they do carry a higher pricetag.

Chiles remarked that the kiddie ride industry is not only growing but is also growing up. Some of the latest rides are more sophisticated and offer full interaction including the rider controlling the motion and the speed of the ride.

Also notable, a large number of rides are manufactured outside of the United States and its territories. Companies that distribute these rides have worked with overseas manufacturers to make the rides safer, easier to service, and more appealing to the U.S. market. Clearly, overseas manufacturers are broadening their portion of U.S. market.



***Richard Scarry Apple Car* took first place in three categories of the NKRA 1997 Equipment Poll.**

Winners in seven categories are:

Best New Kiddie Ride Design: 1st—*Snoopy Doghouse*, Theisen Vending/Jolly Roger; Runner-Up—*SpideRider*/Kiddie's Mfg.

Best Licensed Kiddie Ride, Highest Earning Kiddie Ride, and Best Indoor Kiddie Ride: 1st—*Richard Scarry Apple Car*, Theisen Vending/Jolly Roger; Runner-Up—*Muppet Car*, Dudley's Kiddie Amusements/EMT.

Best Outdoor Kiddie Ride: 1st—*Carousel*, Carousel International; Runner-Up—*4 x 4 Truck*, Dudley's Kiddie Amusements.

Best Classic Kiddie Ride: 1st—*Carousel*, Carousel International; Runner-Up—*Sandy Horse*, United Tool.

Best Kiddie Ride Service & Support: 1st—Dudley's Kiddie Amusements; Runner-Up: Theisen Vending.

Roller skating show set for May

Roller rink operators and anyone interested in learning more about the roller skating industry will converge on Disney's Coronado Springs Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Fla., May 3-7 for the Roller Skating Association International's 1998 convention and trade show.

Full delegate registration includes admittance to the welcome reception, president's dinner, general assembly, seminar program, and trade show. Last year's show attracted 109 companies exhibiting skates, wheels accessories, redemption games and prizes, food products, insurance opportunities, and more.

Seminars will cover Amazing Promotions, Houdinis of Hockey, Magic Tricks of the Trade, The Legal Crystal Ball, The Cryptic World of Litigation, Marketing Marvels, Musical Mysteries, and learning to Be a Business Wizard.

Optional programs include the RSA's first-ever Roller Skating University, a continuing education program that will cover two major topics: food service and safety. In addition to receiving discounted Disney World park tickets, attendees may also attend the optional Disney program, Innovations in Action, which provides backstage tours of Walt Disney World.

For more information, contact the RSA, (317)347-2626; fax (317)347-2636; e-mail (rsa@ointernet.com); Web site (http://www.rollerskating.org).

Chaney opens Keystone Supply

Jim Chaney, formerly vice president of sales at The Component Factory, recently formed Keystone Game Supply Inc.

"Keystone Game Supply has acquired the exclusive rights to a wide range of quality products: game boards including Jingle Bell, Chest-O-Treasure Cranes, cabinets, and other electronic components," explained Chaney. "Another vital element is commitment to service and fast service turnaround.

"Our service department has a wealth of industry experience and thoroughly understands the requirements of our customers," he added. "We service everything we sell!"

For more information, contact Keystone Game Supply, 340 Constance Dr., Suite 3, Warminster, PA 18974; (888)869-7711; fax (215)675-5767.

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Heads-Up replaces laser tag system at Alaskan location

A former Q-Zar entertainment complex in Anchorage, Alaska, recently announced the installation of a LaserTrek real-time laser tag game created by Heads Up Technologies. The Factory is the first entertainment location in the northwest United States to offer the LaserTrek system.

In addition to laser tag, the location features the latest in arcade games and other out-of-home entertainment activities and has plans to install a new generation of virtual reality attractions and food concepts in the near future.

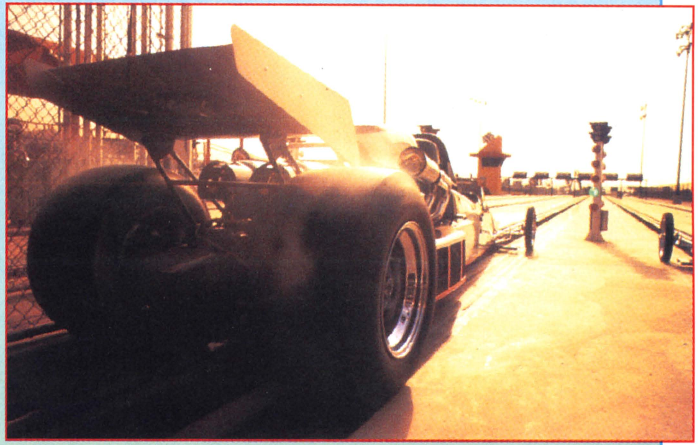
Heads Up was hired by The Factory to replace the Q-Zar equipment and integrate LaserTrek into the facility's existing arena. The company quickly assembled a team to install the new system.

"By choosing LaserTrek, we were able to rapidly upgrade our equipment and become the first in Alaska to offer visitors a sophisticated theme park-quality laser tag system that will not only attract people to the facility but will keep them returning," said Jim Found, owner of The Factory.

"We designed LaserTrek to function in almost any setting," said Heads Up president Rob Harshaw. "LaserTrek's technology allowed us to install the system in an existing arena originally created for a completely different system with few alterations to the present site."

For more information, contact Heads Up Technology, (214)407-1131; fax (214)407-1758; Web site (http://www.heads-up.com).

Extreme exposure



Speed Zone, the 12-acre racing theme park devoted to speed and competition, was featured last month on the Discovery Channel's "Extreme Rides" prime time television special. Just opened last summer, the location boasts four scaled race tracks as well as the Top Eliminator attraction that puts customers behind the driver's seat of a 300-horsepower, fully-scaled dragster.

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TouchMaster Owner

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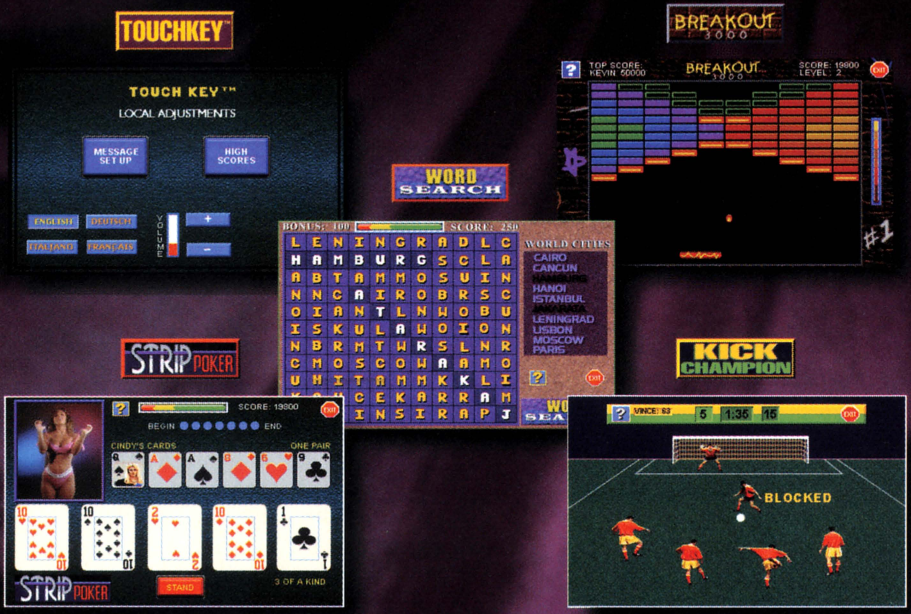
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Directory corrections

✐ In addition to supplying used games, Port Jefferson Station, N.Y.,-based Graff Amusements also distributes the following lines: Debit Dial Vending, Great American Recreation, Hamilton, ICE, Imonex, Klopp, Noel, Triton, and Tidel. You can reach the company at (516)331-3899 or (888)441-5356.

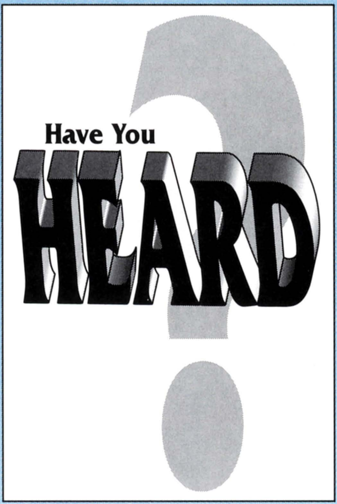
✐ T. W. Gilchrist Vending represents the following lines not listed in our directory: ESD, Laniel Canada Changers, E.R.G. Compilation Discs, and Incredible Technologies. For more information, contact Craig McRae, (416)256-0377; e-mail (gilchristvending@compuserve.com).

✐ The toll-free phone number for Q-Tech Business Products was incorrect. The correct number is (800)831-4175.

✐ ARMS International was omitted from the directory after a division merger with Fun Center Software. However, company president Lou Capetta reports that ARMS will continue to sell and service amusement support items such as ticket counting scales, ticket shredders, and game stools. Capetta also predicted some new and exciting products coming in the near future. For more information, contact the company: 921 Cedar Bridge Ave., Brick, NJ 08733; (732)262-9776; fax (732)262-9404.

✐ The Shuffleboard Federation, listed under "Leagues," also manufactures and distributes the largest selection of shuffleboard products. They can be reached at (248)380-9300 or (800)380-3033.

☛ The United States Mint held a Stakeholders Meeting last month to review issues related to the newly mandated dollar coin. Representatives of AAMA, AMOA, and NAMA were all present.



☛ Seeburg Corp. in East Lansing, Mich., has opened a parts division and has plans to introduce a digitally downloading jukebox in the next 12 to 18 months. For more information, call (800)SEEBURG or check out the company Web site (http://www.seeburg.com).

☛ S & B Candy and Toy Co. has a new 30,000-square-foot facility located at 1535 N. Broadway, St. Louis, MO 63102. "We now have the graphic capability and warehouse capacity to sell our own exclusive brand name candy packages," said company president Brian Riggles.

☛ The phone number at Coin ConneXion remains the same, (605)331-5575. They can also be reached by fax, (605)331-5574, or e-mail (sales@coincnx.com). An incorrect number was printed in last month's "Software Update."

☛ More than 40 companies are expected to exhibit products during the two-day 1998 North Carolina Amusement Machine Association Annual Convention and Trade Show, April 2-4, Charlotte Hilton at University Place, Charlotte, N.C.

☛ Auction Game Sales has moved up the date of its April 4 Winston-Salem auction to March 28 at the Dixie Classic Fairgrounds to accommodate the NCAMA show dates in Charlotte.

☛ Exidy has a new area code for its phone and fax numbers. You can reach the company at (650)364-5286; fax (650)364-5201; e-mail (exidy@batnet.com).

☛ The Wisconsin Amusement and Music Operators Association will hold its upcoming pool tournament, March 26-29, in Oconomowac, Wis., near Milwaukee. The association's 14th Annual Dart Tournament is May 14-17 at the LaCrosse Center in LaCrosse, Wis.

☛ Bob Snyder & Associates Inc. and National Games Laboratory has a new address. They are now headquartered at 782 Trotter Court, Walnut, CA 91789.

☛ Canadian-based CashCode Co. has expanded into a new office in Las Vegas just down the street from its former location. The new address is 2860 E. Flamingo Road, Suite C, Las Vegas, NV 89121. Phone and fax remain the same, (702)791-2633; fax (702)791-0455.

☛ Springfield, Ill.-based operator and redemption supplier Three Point Redemption has moved into a new 3,000-square-foot warehouse and is now specializing in six-inch plush and prizes. The new address is 331 S. New St., Springfield, IL 62704.

☛ Play-By-Play Toys & Novelties has been awarded the master license by Warner Bros. Consumer Products to design, manufacture, and distribute its Looney Tunes and Cartoon Network characters in Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, and Africa.

☛ The Ohio Coin Machine Association will hold its 24th Annual Expo at Holiday Inn East in Columbus on Aug. 13-14.

☛ Incredible Technologies has moved into a new office at 1600 Hicks Road, Rolling Meadows, IL 60008; (847)870-7027; fax (847)870-0120.

☛ Last month's (Pinball History) story incorrectly listed the toll-free number to order the video Pleasure Machines. The correct number is (888)PIN-VIDEO. ▲

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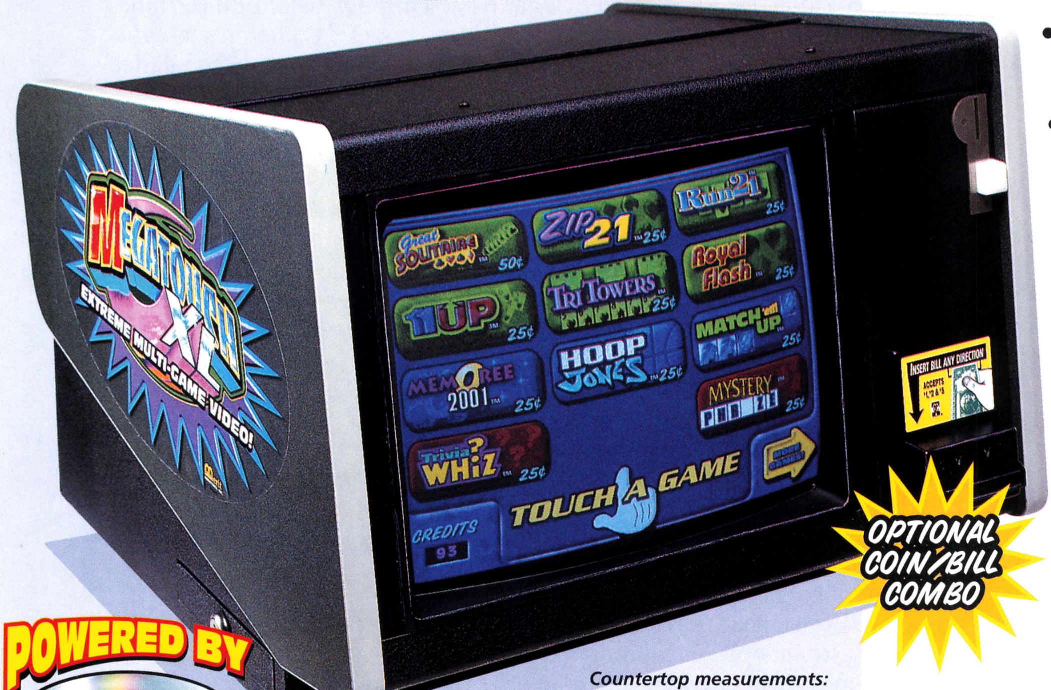

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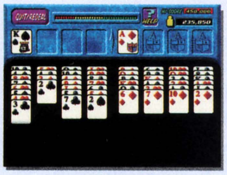

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FROM LEFT FIELD

A bitter pill or the cure

for coin-op's ailments?

Steve White
Special Projects Editor

In this month's ongoing technology column, "Through the Looking Glass," I talked with Intel's director of arcade development Albert Teng, among others, about the evolution of partnerships between traditional arcade companies and computer software developers and hardware manufacturers.

A look at the current Arcade PC initiative reveals an emerging structure of distribution in the largest sense of the word that encompasses at least eight different layers, or what Teng calls "horizontal" levels, of production and sales.

These levels or layers include: hardware manufacturer, software developer (operating for systems and game content), game publisher, arcade manufacturer, system integrator, distributor, and—finally—operator.

Although I am no economist, my first reaction to this picture was: "How can operators make more from a product that has passed through twice or three times as many hands as it does under the current business model?" Common sense dictates that each party in a traditional purchase transaction will levy a value-added service and thus drive the costs up.

The standard target price of an upright game system is $6,000, according to Intel, with a larger location-based entertainment attraction costing double that figure. AMOA's National Amusement Network Inc. is expecting to release kits for as little as $2,000, while full systems will sell from $3,500 to $6,000.

Proponents of a PC-game system say the beauty of its economics lie not in the initial hardware cost but in its re-usable nature and the plethora of content a universal, open platform will spawn. However, operators have long been familiar with the return on investment offered by low-cost kits and will be looking closely at the cost of software content.

So how can software costs be minimized when each title must make money for a game developer, software publisher, arcade manufacturer, distributor, and operator? The answer was provided by another interviewee in this month's issue, Brad Brown of Worldwide Video Entertainment in San Diego, Calif.

Brown, no stranger to the limelight, was one of the first to propose a universal game platform. In our profile of his self-described national distribution firm, which focuses solely on video games, Brown argues that a universal, PC-based platform can only succeed when the industry adopts revenue-sharing.

"I believe most coin operators are going to be very slow in accepting the new hardware expense unless the game is a number one game," Brown told *Play Meter.* "The operator will eventually have to accept the revenue-sharing model. It will be an absolute must in the future, and I also believe it will be a positive move for everyone down the chain. "

While revenue-sharing may spread the risk across several, if not all, of the current and future levels of game suppliers, it will also force industry veterans to open their cash boxes to other individuals and companies, a strategy long rejected by rank and file operators.

However, the technology of debit and credit card readers, as well as network and modem connections and game monitoring software, has already breached cash box security, opening the door to revenue-sharing possibilities.

In fact, Incredible Technologies has already set up a system that sweeps operator accounts for special tournament fees, and TouchTunes Digital Jukebox has launched its downloading jukebox on a revenue-sharing model in which operators bear no up front costs.

So the question for operators is whether revenue-sharing is a bitter but inevitable pill to swallow or a cure for what ails the coin-op industry. Or is it both? ▲

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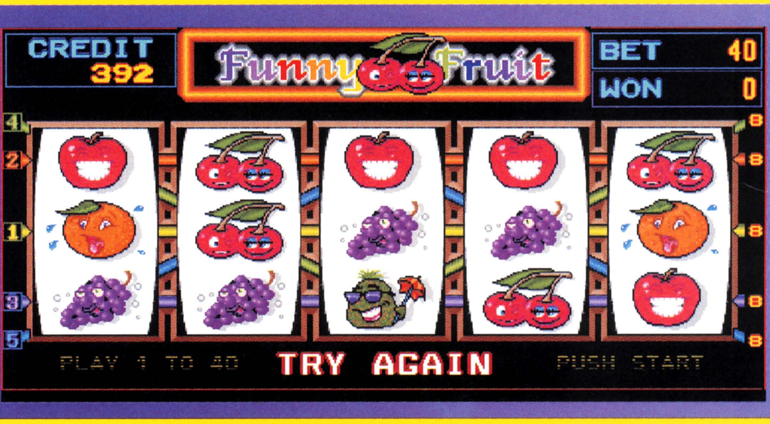
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Funny Fruit
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2
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8
8
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8
8
PLAY 1 TO 40
TRY AGAIN
PUSH START

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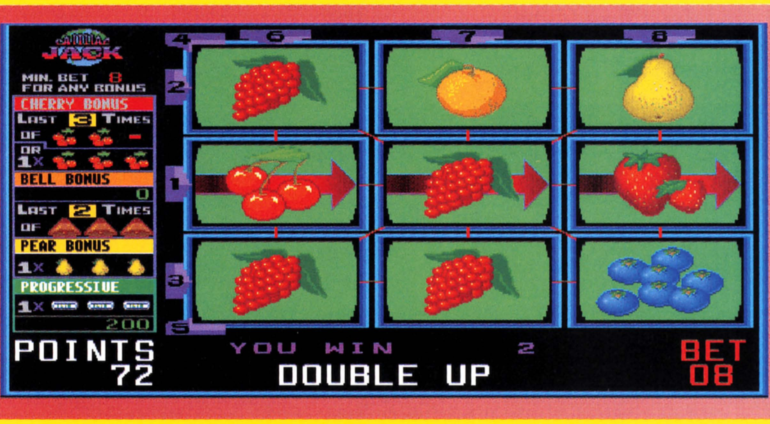
CADILLAC JACK
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POINTS
72
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5
YOU WIN 2
DOUBLE UP
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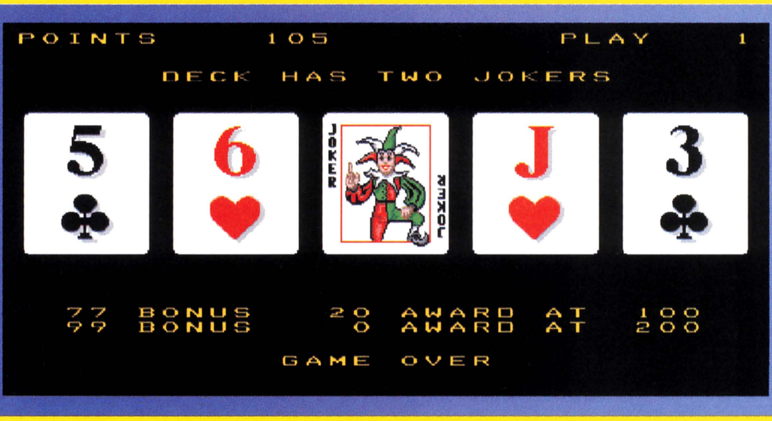
POINTS 105
PLAY 1
DECK HAS TWO JOKERS
5
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99 BONUS 0 AWARD AT 200
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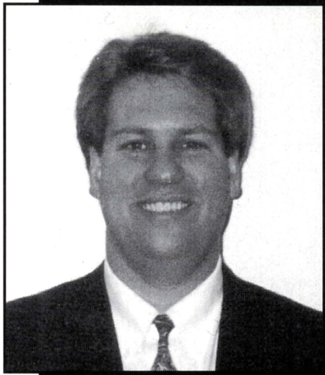
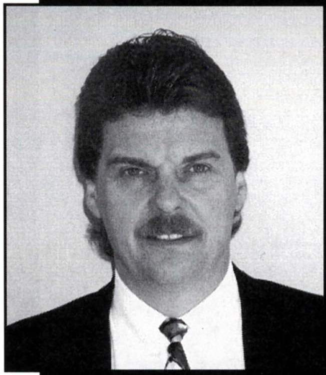
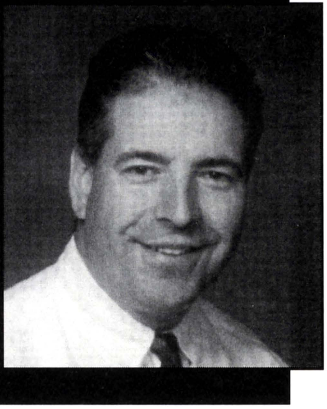

MARTY MANN SMITH

THERESA RIVAS


DOUG BLAIR


PETE DOWNS

The AMOA National Dart Association has named **LESLIE MURPHY** of Indianapolis to be executive director of the association. She succeeds Mike Smythe.

Murphy will be responsible for the daily successful operations of the association, which was formed in 1986. It has grown substantially over the past decade to boast a membership of 400 companies and over 60,000 sanctioned electronic dart players. NDA activities include player sanctioning, standardization of rules and regulations, and sponsorship of two annual international tournaments: one in the spring for dart teams and another in the fall for singles and doubles players.

Murphy has a distinguished career in association management, and earned the CAE certification in the association management profession. Most recently she was administrator of Key Clubs International, a youth program of Kiwanis International with over 180,000 members worldwide. Murphy can be reached at (317)387-1299 or via the NDA Web site (http:\\www.nda.org).

SNK Corp. of America has appointed **MARTY MANN SMITH** as southeastern regional sales manager and **THERESA RIVAS** as sales administrator. Smith was formerly director of marketing for the entertainment division of Ideal Software Systems; Rivas was formerly parts manager for Data East USA. Both are enthusiastic about the new challenges that await them at SNK. Smith and Rivas can be reached at (408)292-4550; fax (408)292-4271.

Adventure Entertainment Corp., a branded chain of FECs that operates 21 entertainment facilities in the United States, has appointed **ROBERT STEELE** to the post of president and CEO. Steele will oversee the company's national strategic expansion and acquisition efforts and serve on the board of directors. He was previously with PepsiCo, where he served as CEO of PepsiCo Restaurants Europe. His experience is considered critical to the company's growth.

Randolph Levinson will remain as chairman and Roger Linville and Henry Woodburn will continue as executive vice presidents at AEC, which plans to aggressively build its flagship parks in strategic markets. AEC can be reached at (212)688-3600.

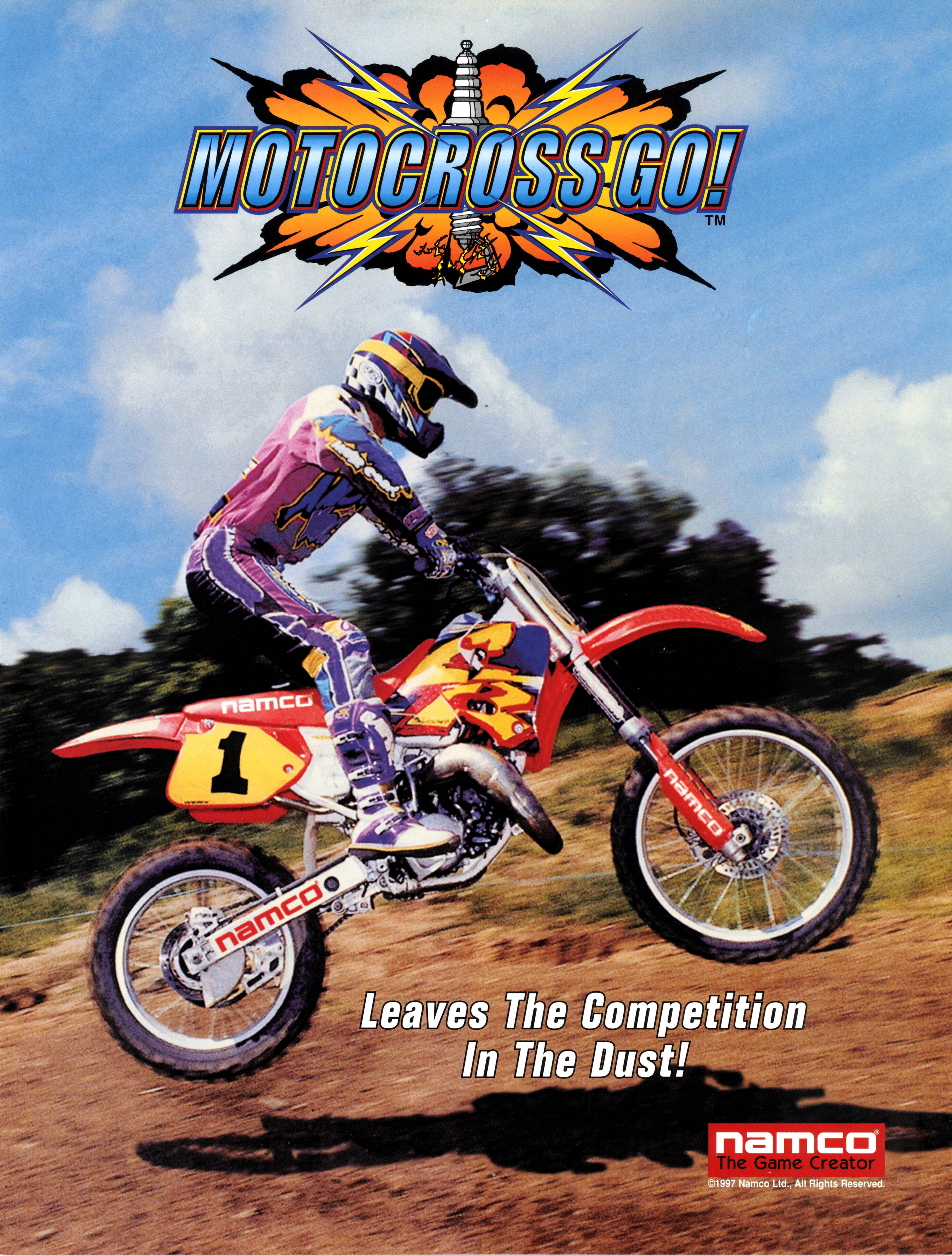
DOUG BLAIR is the new sales manager at Mazzco, the Bensenville, Ill., company that produces power supplies, hand trucks, lighting, joysticks, lock bars, ceiling speakers, and other equipment for the coin-op industry. Blair was formerly vice president of sales for Valley Recreation Products and before that was with parts supplier Wico. Blair can be reached at (630)616-8200 or (800)292-4491; fax (630)616-8290 or (888)671-2349.

Waterloo Tent & Tarp. Co. has named **PETE DOWNS** as national sales manager responsible for the sales, marketing, and distribution of the company's products to the outdoor amusement industry. His primary area of concentration will be the carnival market. The product line includes covers for commercial, recreational, and industrial use including canopies, ride tops, truck covers, and custom products. The phone in Iowa is (800) 537-1193.

ELENA RUANE has been appointed executive director of the Enchanted Castle Restaurant & Entertainment Complex in Lombard, Ill., (630-953-7866). Ruane will oversee all aspects of Castle operations including sales, marketing, and finance. She was previously vice president of sales, marketing, and development, a post she held since 1989. Ruane has been a frequent guest speaker at industry trade shows, served on the IAAPA FEC committee, and been active in the IAFEC.

JIM KELLY has been added to the expanding staff of TouchTunes Digital Jukebox Inc. as regional sales manager for the Mid-Atlantic area. He has over 25 years of experience in sales, customer service, and technical support. His industry career includes tenure with Mondial Distributing, Merit Industries, and Banner Distributing.

Kelly can be reached at (215)830-1452. ▲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MOTOCROSS GO!™

MOTOCROSS GO! provides the player with all the excitement of motocross racing without eating dirt! Bike-to-bike bumping and collisions add to the competitiveness of the game. Spectacular jumps mimics those of real riders! Cornering techniques must be mastered to win the race. **MOTOCROSS GO!** is a grueling 24 hour race where an emphasis on skill, technique and strategy separate the winners from the losers!

- Three courses to choose from! Novice, Intermediate and Advanced

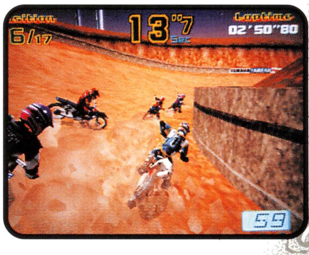
BOTH VERSIONS FEATURE:

- Linkable to four units!
- Left/Right leaning and handlebar feedback steering!
- "Twist" throttle and "squeeze" type brake controls.
- Adjustable viewpoint button: First or third-person.

DELUXE VERSION FEATURES:

- Separate audio channel with a gas mounted speaker for realistic engine sound.
- Pneumatic bike frame feedback.

The popular theme and challenging game play make **MOTOCROSS GO!** a winner as a single player or linked game.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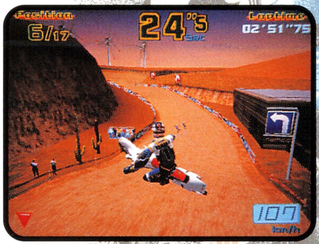
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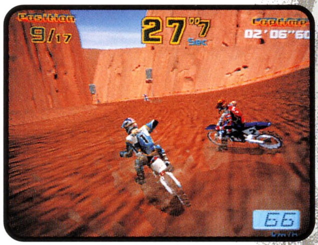
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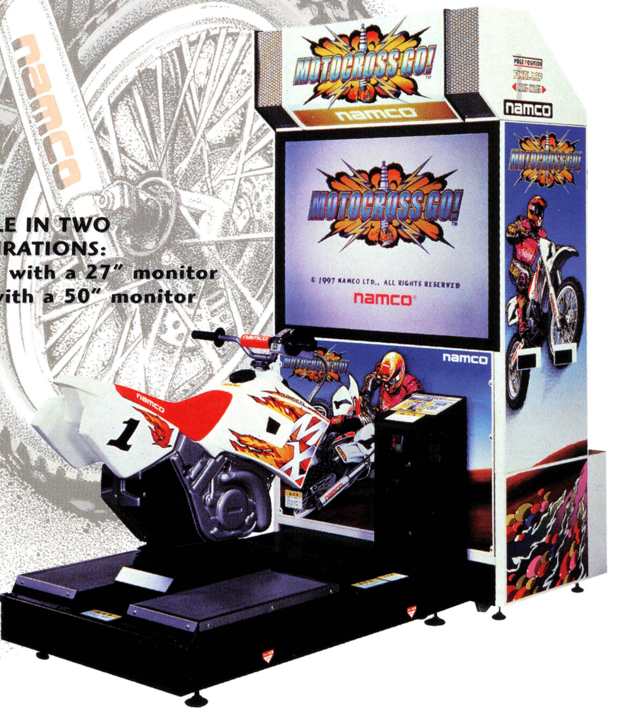
AVAILABLE IN TWO CONFIGURATIONS:
Standard, with a 27" monitor
Deluxe, with a 50" monitor


MOTOCROSS GO!
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1

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150 Charcot Avenue
San Jose, CA 95131
(408) 383-3900 Phone
(408) 383-0128 Fax
http://www.namco.com

Specifications:
Standard Installed Dimensions: 82"H x 34.5"W x 86"D
500 watts
Deluxe Installed Dimensions: 91"H x 46"W x 101"D
1150 watts
Specifications subject to change without notice.

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The Game Creator

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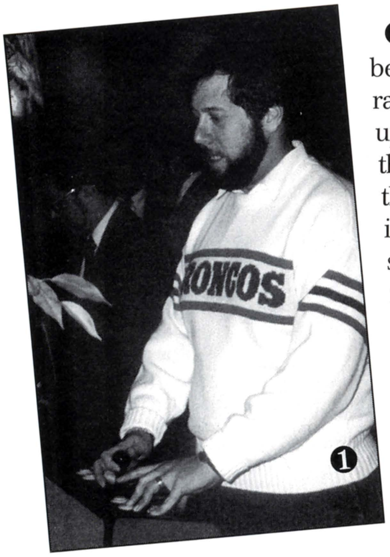
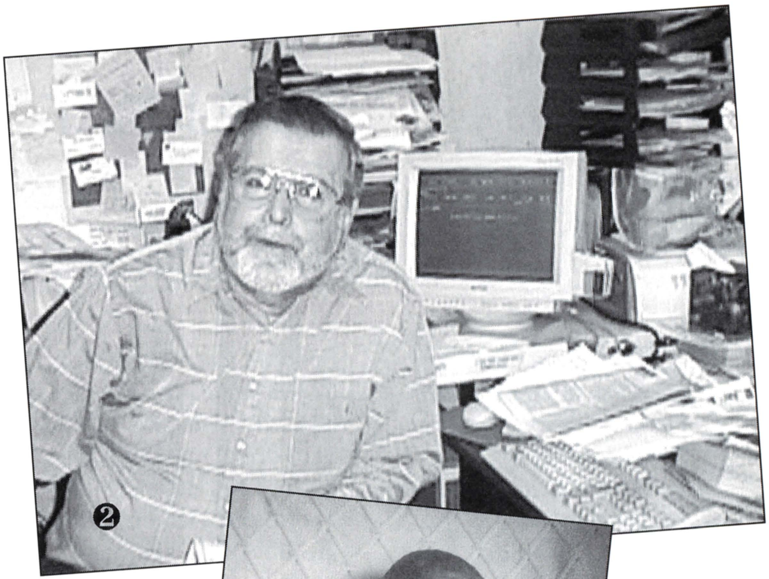
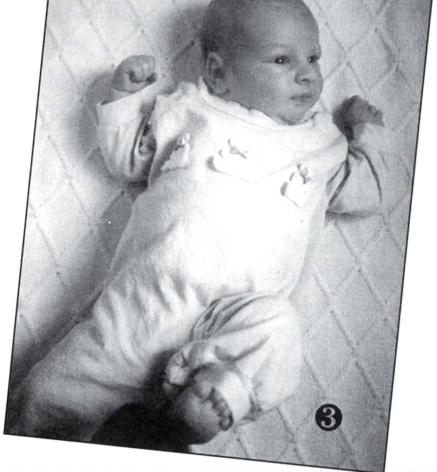
BEYOND THE PLAYFIELD







❶ GO BRONCOS! Long before John Elway and his comrades led the Denver team to an upset AFC over NFC victory in the Super Bowl, Rich Babich of the Colorado Game and Vending Exchange was a staunch supporter. Here he is engrossed in playing *Vigilante* (Data East 1988), sporting his Broncos sweatshirt.

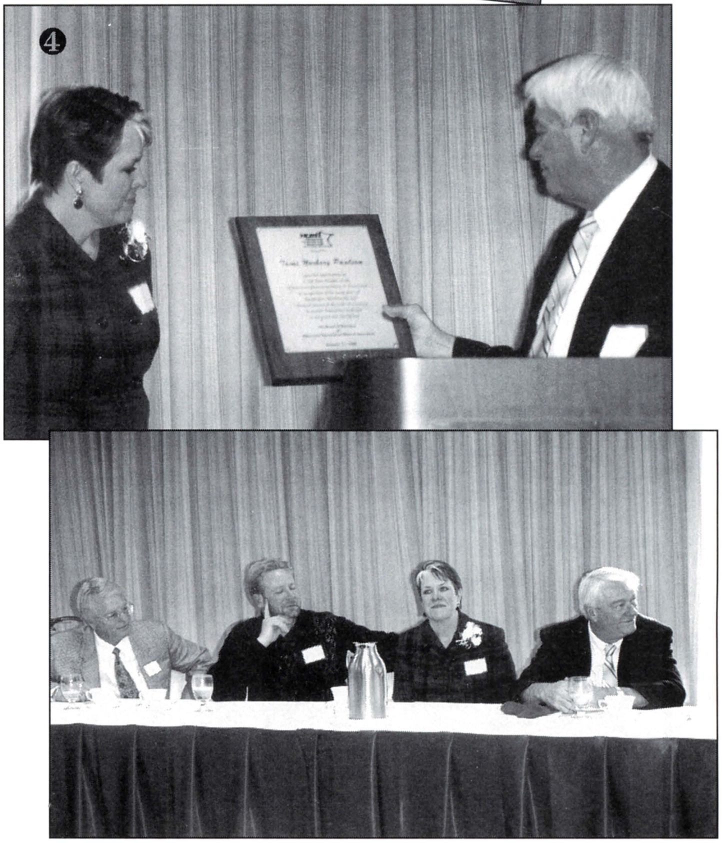
❷ WHAT A MESSY DESK! This photo of Mark Blum of United Distributors in Wichita, Kan., hard at work or hardly working (we're not sure which), arrived in our e-mail box recently and we decided to share it with our readers.

❸ WELCOME BO! Here's the first photo available of little Bo Wilke, son of Bailey Beeken and her husband David Wilke. He was a much anticipated year-end addition to the family of the Fun Expo's originator. Congratulations!

❹ TAMI NORBERG-PAULSEN retired from C & N Sales Co. in January amid a round of well-wishing from 40 friends and colleagues who attended a luncheon in her honor in suburban Minneapolis. Tami was recognized for her state leadership in the Minnesota Operators of Music and Amusements and her national leadership in AMOA. She was the only woman elected president of MOMA and only the second woman to serve as president of AMOA.

On hand for the occasion were Don Hesch of A.H. Entertainers, current AMOA president; Randy Chilton of Chilton Vending & Billiards, past AMOA president; Lloyd Williamson of Williamson's Sugar Loaf Amusement, MOMA president; Hy Sandler, executive director of MOMA; and Linda Winstead of Lieberman Music Co. representing the MOMA board of directors. Also present were former AMOA presidents Norm Pink of American Amusement Arcades, Dick Hawkins of D & R Star, current AMOA first vice president Jim Stansfield of Stansfield Vending, and Dick Shelton of Valley.

Tami received a plaque and a gold bangle bracelet as a token of the affection that so many in the industry feel for her. She now begins a new career working with her husband Bryan in his architectural design firm. Sandler summed up the sentiments of all those present when he said, "As you go on to new challenges, we wish you, along with your family, good luck, good health, and the very best of everything. May you go from strength to strength!" ▲



Top: Lloyd Williamson presents a plaque to Tami Norberg-Paulsen. Bottom, (l-r): Don Hesch, Bryan Paulsen, Tami Norberg-Paulsen, and Lloyd Williamson.

NetPecker Vending System

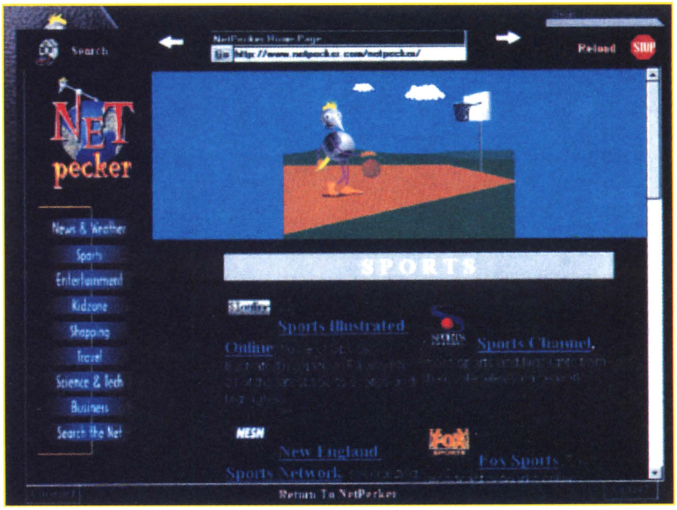
Internet Vending Systems Co. presents its NetPecker Internet Vending System designed to tap into to the burgeoning popularity of Internet attractions. The computer and monitor of this commercial Internet terminal are enclosed in a rugged, freestanding metal case, and access is limited via hatches and secure locks.

This kiosk unit's dimensions are 5' high x 2' wide x 3' deep. It is available as a sit-down or stand-up unit and comes equipped with user-friendly Internet access software and a bill acceptor. In addition to Internet access, the machine offers the latest in computer games. Options include credit card access, a chair, and a special lock package. NetPecker comes in standard black although custom colors are available.

The system is a 133 MHz Pentium class processor, 32 MB RAM/512 L2 cache. It has 2 MB Video RAM, 1 GB hard drive, 1.44 MB floppy drive, 8x CD-ROM, 16-bit sound card, stereo speakers, 33.6 kbps standard dial-up modem, surge protector, and 14" SVGA standard monitor.

High-speed options available include frame relay connection, ISDN connection, T1 connection, satellite DirectPC link, cable modem, or digital subscriber line where available. The company is offering the unit on a lease program and offers coupons to stimulate business from new customers.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Internet Vending Systems, (603)526-4888 or (888)557-4900; fax (508)862-0438; e-mail (h32@cyberportal.net) or (salesinfo@netpecker.com)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Fox Sports
Return To NetPecker

Quick Silver vendors

Quick Silver Development announces two new vending units: *Merlin's Magic Touch* bulk vendor and the new *Classic Jukebox* vendor. Both units offer four-channel sound and weigh 200 pounds.

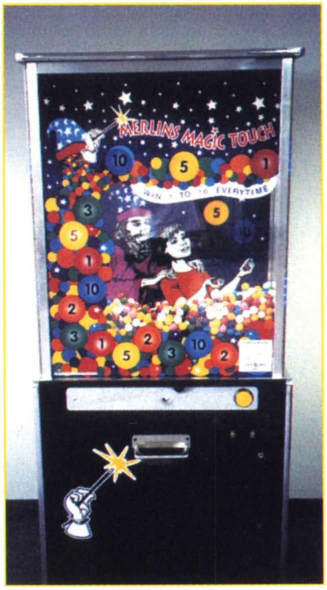
Merlin's Magic Touch bulk vendor is made of Melamine panel on wood, has a capacity of 4,900 cubic inches, and is available with the following options: multiproduct dispensers, and operator-programmable eight-color dot matrix display.

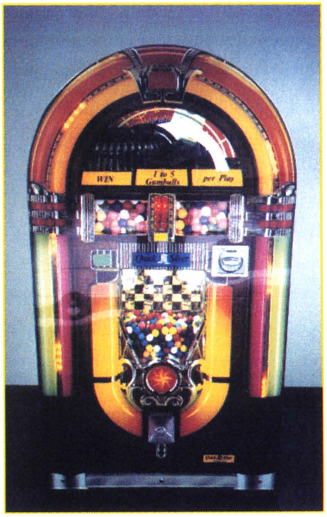
This bulk vendor is an interactive unit which features a series of flashing lights numbered from one to 10 that blink on and off in a random pattern. Players then attempt to stop the lights on the highest number lit to win a corresponding number of gumballs, capsules, or toys. Customers always get a vended product and can receive up to 10 vends per play.

The *Classic Jukebox* vendor comes with either a single or two-product vendor, is made of wood with wood grain Formica covering, and has a capacity of 3,600 cubic inches. Quick Silver has the capability of programming any short clip of music into the system.

Not only does the unit reward the patron with a prize and music, it also gets the customer involved in the action. Players are challenged to stop random blinking lights. They always receive one product and can win up to five rewards per play. The vendor with its four-color rope lighting, great sound, and vibrant graphics is also sure to draw interest from new players.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Quick Silver Development, (702)888-8100; fax (702)888-1111.


MERLINS MAGIC TOUCH
WIN 1 TO 10 EVERYTIME


WIN
1 to 5 Gumballs
per Play
Quick Silver

California Speed

Atari Games continues its roll of popular driving games with the release of *California Speed*, a game developed as a street-priced driver and all the elements of a classic. It offers an accessible driving model, in-depth selection of cars and tracks, and eye-catching graphics. The game is available in 25" and 33" monitor configurations.

Utilizing hardware designed around 3Dfx's Voodoo Graphics chipset, *Speed* offers 40 minutes of unique game play, several replay features, and a Do The State option that rewards players with one of several unique game endings when they have completed all 14 courses.

The player-friendly driving model eliminates crashes. Cars simply flip over and immediately get right back into the race making the game popular with players of all skill levels.

Game play features 14 unique sound tracks to go with each track, 12 cars, automatic and manual transmission, short cuts, and mirrored track mode. Tracks include Silicon Valley, Santa Cruz, Monterey, Laguna Seca, Hwy. 1, Central Valley, Los Angeles, Willow Springs, San Diego, Mojave, Yosemite, Mt. Shasta, Sears Point, and San Francisco.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Atari Games, (408)434-3700; fax (408)434-3776; Web site (http://www.atarigames.com)

Car 1
California SPEED
Car 2
California SPEED
California SPEED
California SPEED
SPEED
ATARI GAMES
SPEED
ATARI GAMES

Men's Room, Bombs Away

Outstanding Amusements introduces two eye-catching midway-style amusement attractions: *Men's Room* and *Bombs Away.*

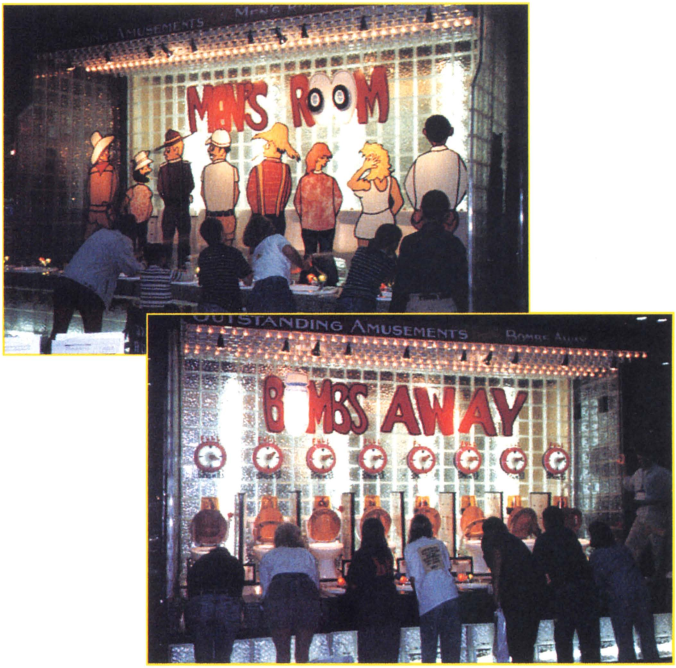
Men's Room pits players against one another in an attempt to fill their sight tube with water as they shoot heavy streams of water from their sink station across the floor and into the waiting urinals.

The game features adjustable score and time, winner lights and win memory lights, crystallized acrylic illuminated block wall, independent halogen spotlighter system, deluxe operator control and player indicators, animated signs, sound system and music p.a., player and level count system, overhead light grid and controllers, and remote control. Dimensions are 8-1/2" long x 2' wide.

Bombs Away generates a furious pace of excitement as players grab hands full of balls from their sink station in an attempt to toss the most balls into the toilet targets while the seats wave at them. The sound of falling bombs and flushing toilets fills the arena. Players score bombs to advance their bomb meter. The winner is the player who hits the full mark.

Features include adjustable score and time, winner lights and win memory lights, crystallized acrylic illuminated block wall, independent halogen spotlighter system, deluxe operator control and player indicators, animated signs, sound system and music p.a., player and level count system, overhead light grid and controllers, and remote control. Dimensions are 8-1/2" long x 2' wide.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Outstanding Amusements; (732)671-0329; fax (732)671-0329.



Austin Powers, Udderly Tickets

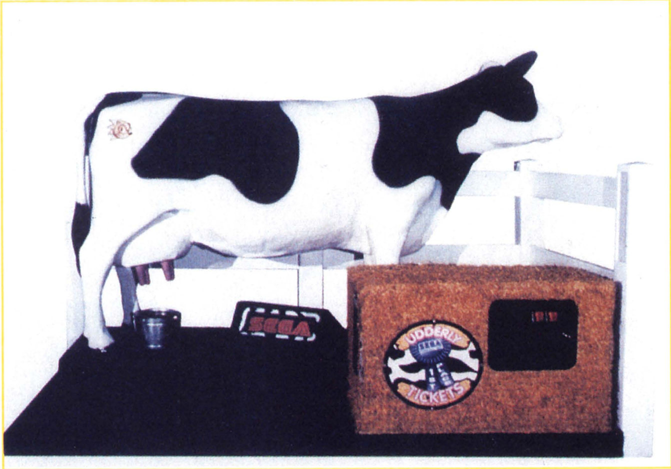
Sega Pinball has unveiled its two newest redemption titles: *Austin Powers* and *Udderly Tickets*.

The first was licensed from the New Line Productions film of the same name which grossed $56 million and sat at the top of video rentals earlier this year. A sequel is already in the works. *Austin Powers* is an eye-catching two-player coin roll-down game that comes with a fantastic sound package and groovy 1960s-inspired graphic art.

Udderly Tickets* is a full-sized fiberglass cow figure that comes complete with a fence and bale of hay. The idea is to quickly grab or yank on the udders as they light up thus earning tickets.

The game's sounds are both hysterical and realistic and players listening closely may hear a familiar song from childhood. Features include adjustable time and ticket values.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Sega Pinball, (708)345-7700; fax (708)345-7718.



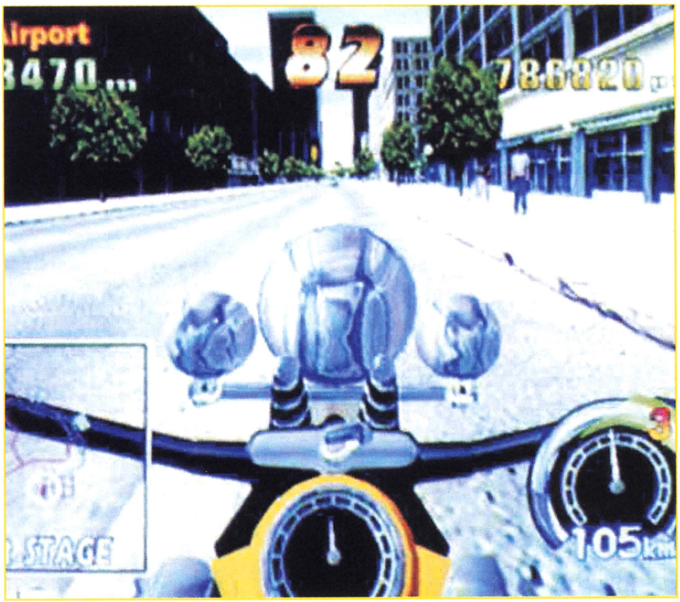
Harley-Davidson & L.A. Rider

Sega GameWorks announces the debut of a new title *Harley-Davidson & L.A. Rider*, a motorcycle riding experience from Sega and motorcycle legend Harley-Davidson, which will be celebrating 95 years in business this year.

Harley-Davidson & L.A. Rider offers players the option of selecting a FLSTF Fat Boy, FL Panhead 1948, FXDWG Dyna Wide Glide, XL 1200S Sportster, 1200 Sport, or a FXRP Police Motorcycle to tour the roads of Los Angeles. New to the game of racing is the ability to choose several routes in the quest for the goal line.

Players can literally feel Model 3's 3D graphics and one million polygons racing at them while they maneuver their way through shortcuts, side streets, and detours. High-resolution monitors (50" deluxe and 29" standard) along with two power-packed speakers and one shaker propel the rider into a rumbling adventure. As many as four bikes can be linked together.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Sega GameWorks, (650)802-3100; fax (650)802-3120; Web site (http://www.sega.com).



What will you do with your CD's?

Recently, we held a contest for the most creative use for jukebox CD's (since our TouchTunes™ Digital Jukebox will be making them obsolete). Our favorite suggestion came from Ms. Della Askew, of Experiment, Georgia:

Make a bikini out of CD's.

Thanks for your lovely suggestion, Della. We hope you enjoy your prize, a $350 BOSE® Wave® Radio. And thanks to the hundreds of others who entered. If we can inspire so many people now, imagine how inspired customers will be when they hear us?

For more information, call 1-888-338-JUKE.

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Sesame Street kiddie rides

Kiddie Ride Enterprises has been allowed by the Children's Television Workshop to license classic Sesame Street characters for kiddie rides in the United States. Previously, the characters had been licensed for rides in the United Kingdom and Europe. The ride characters and vehicles are hand sculpted by one of Sesame Street's master sculptors.

Three rides have been introduced simultaneously: *Elmo & Zoe's EZ Rider Racecar; Bert & Ernie's 123 Fire Engine,* and *Big Bird Jet Way's Airplane.*

Each ride has a number of surprises under the hood including easily accessible major components, the ability to service parts without disassembling the entire ride, maintenance free wheels and bearings that will never need alignments or adjustments, fan-cooled motor and reducer, ultraviolet protected and weatherproofed electrical cables, a state-of-the-art easily-accessible sound system and timer board, and a dual coin box from Coin Mechanisms that holds 20 percent more coins than traditional licensed rides.

The ride frame has been affixed with a tow bar hitch for easy maneuverability and placement, and even the foot pegs have been custom engineered for placement on all type of floors. Each ride's frame/chassis has been powder coated and outfitted with strain reliefs and rubber grommets for the motor chassis and wire harness.

Kiddie Ride Enterprises' new Accu-Track exclusive ride drive motion system, which will be fully explained at this month's ASI show, has been designed to allow no mechanical play or tolerance in the drive system of the ride. It ensures added reliability and safety through its eight-wheel offset wheel pattern drive system, eliminating irregular up, down, left, right, front, and back movement found in many kiddie rides.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Kiddie Ride Enterprises, (516)586-6059 or (800)858-7433; fax (516)586-6305. ▲

BIG BIRD
JET WAYS
SESAME STREET

EZ
SESAME STREET

WATCHING YOUR PROFITS SPIRAL!

If you are a traditional coin machine operator, you're always in the market for new ideas. Over your business life, you've probably added various types of equipment to your expanding route. We're about to tell you about spiral machines, which could very well be the next addition you've been looking for.

VALERIE COGNEVICH

Gumball vendors are not new. In fact, customers have been inserting money and getting gumballs for years. But it has just never been so amusing and entertaining. Kevin Church of Global Gumball recalls when his boss and company founder Dave Haymond set out to make the biggest gumball machine in the world. Church described Haymond as a route operator with the traditional rack machines and a tinkerer by nature. Haymond created a huge machine that held 30,000 gumballs and sported a giant red base under a clear cylinder. That accomplishment under his belt, he then saw potential in the giant red base and viola! he added a spiral for the gumball to make its way down into the chute.

When Haymond was seeing his vision become reality four years ago, he was working out of his garage. But the giant spiral machine was soon in hot demand and real facilities were secured. Since then Global has introduced kinetic, neon, spirals of all sizes, and interactive machines with all the bells and whistles you could want.

Kurt Ostler of OK Mfg., notes that they came from the arcade industry, having owned three arcades and operating in a myriad of street locations. "We started OK in 1992 when *Street Fighter* and *Lethal Enforcers* were popular," Ostler said. "We purchased one of the really big gumball vendors and found it got a better return than our video games. As the price of video games began to escalate, we started looking at another industry–bulk vending."

Today, OK Mfg. produces one of the highest quality, most reliable machines available. There is the giant 25,000 gumball capacity machine which stands a whopping seven feet tall to the smaller version that holds a fraction of that number. Ostler explains that the spiral vendor is important to operators because it has opened locations that would never have wanted regular bulk gum vendors. "Today you see spiral machines everywhere including Toys R Us, Wal-Mart, K-Mart, Blockbuster Video stores, just to name a few. Locations are more favorable to bulk vending in general because of the success of the spiral machines," Ostler said.

Global's Church agreed that locations are willing, if not eager, to add a spiral machine. "They are so great in so many locations," he said. "Back several years ago, operators could expect to make $300 per month. But now that spiral machines are so much more common, operators should expect to see collections that are less than that. But they're still extremely profitable."

When spiral machines began blanketing the nation, it was usually entrepreneurs that were taking up the challenge, according to OK's Ostler. There were many getting into the business. In 1995 the company sold about 8,000, in 1996 they sold 15,000, and in 1997 sales dropped to 11,000. "A few years ago, the majority of those operating the machines had seen the potential and wanted to get into it," he offered. "They had no experience in any type of vending. Today, we're seeing about 90 percent of our business is reorders from those in the business. There isn't that influx of new people like there was at one time. That's why coin machine operators should take a close look. They already have the locations and it would be a natural addition."

Nancy Lucas of Sweet Sensations operates just under 100 gumball ma-

West Coast Mfg. has this clever spiral machine with a gas tank theme.

SHELL
GASOLINE

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ROAD RUNNER

OK Mfg.'s Road Runner and Toy Runner spirals.

Global's Wizard series from small to giant sized.

Gumball
Wiz Kid
Wizard

THE LONG AWAITED METAL SLUG2 HAS ARRIVED FOR THE NEOGEO 16 BIT SYSTEM

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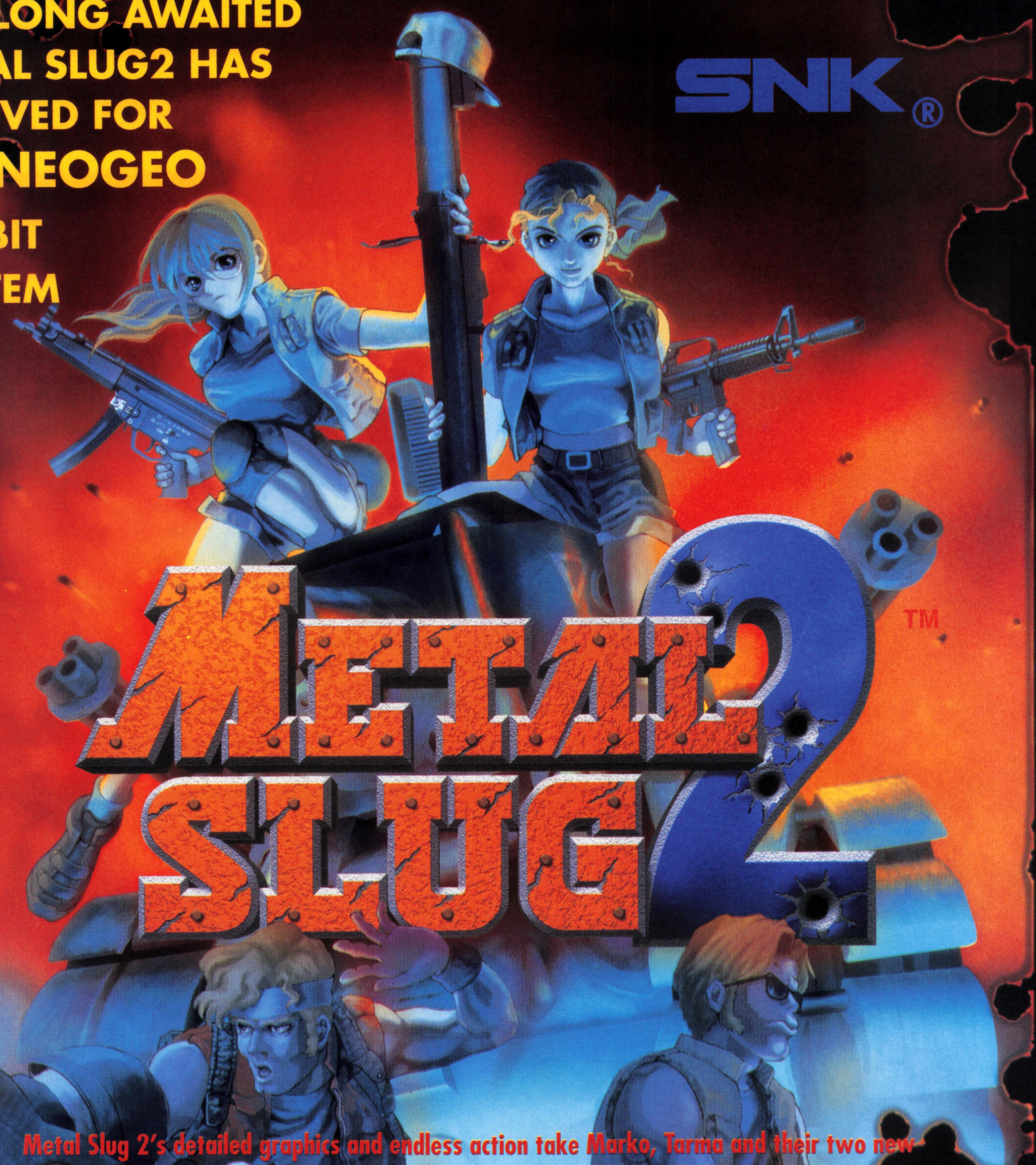

Metal Slug 2's detailed graphics and endless action take Marko, Tarma and their two new partners on a tumultuous journey to rid the world of the evil General Morden.

For more Information, Contact: SNK Corporation of America
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or visit our website at snkusa.com

chines throughout Connecticut. She has them in restaurants, shopping malls, craft stores, and amusement centers. "These machines are wonderful," she said. "We have very little trouble with them. In three years that we've been in business, there is still a high level of enthusiasm for these spiral machines."

She added, "This is a fun business. When it started it was a novelty and admittedly there is a saturation of machines. But there are still accounts to be had and money to be made if you hustle. People are happy to buy gum from these machines and they complement many different types of locations."

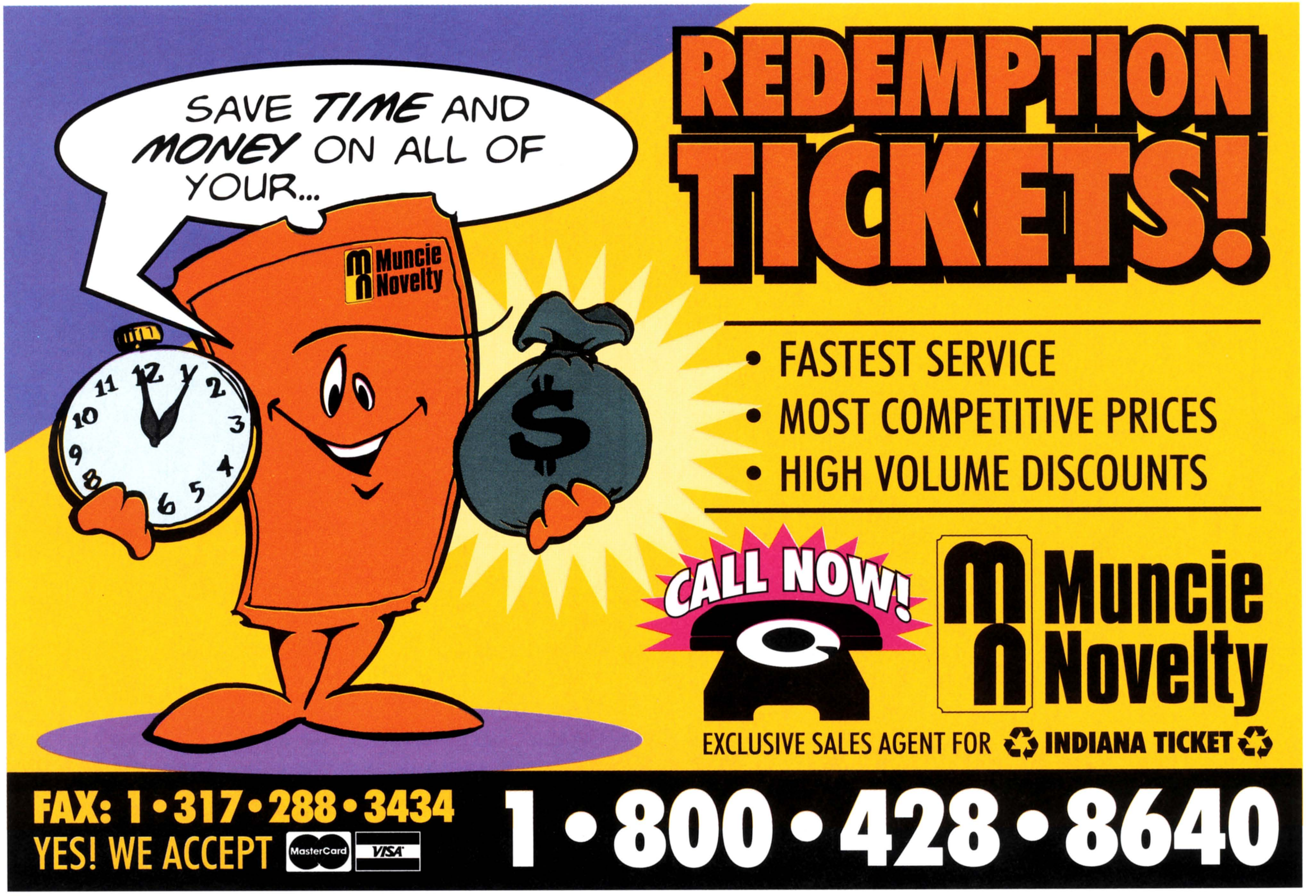
TAKING THE FIRST STEP

OK's Ostler offers this advice for anyone thinking this might be what they are looking for. "First, take a critical look at your existing locations. Determine whether they generate adequate foot traffic. Some operators may already have other types of machines in malls and malls are the best place for spiral machines. They can do up to $400 per month. And remember, they don't just vend gum. There are jawbreakers, capsules, etc. Other locations that do well are convenience stores, bowling centers, and grocery stores. If you already have machines in any of these locations, it should be easy to convince the owner to let you add one or more spiral vendors. I'd say that if you have locations with a pinball machine, you should also operate a spiral vendor."

SHELL
Mobilg

Global's Church cautioned that some locations want the machine but not the gum. "A movie theater and perhaps a bowling center may frown on having their customers buying chewing gum. However, you can vend other things that will not wind up on the floor. Hard candies and small toys are viable alternatives."

Lucas of Sweet Sensations, who has been there and done that, offers some thought-provoking advice for potential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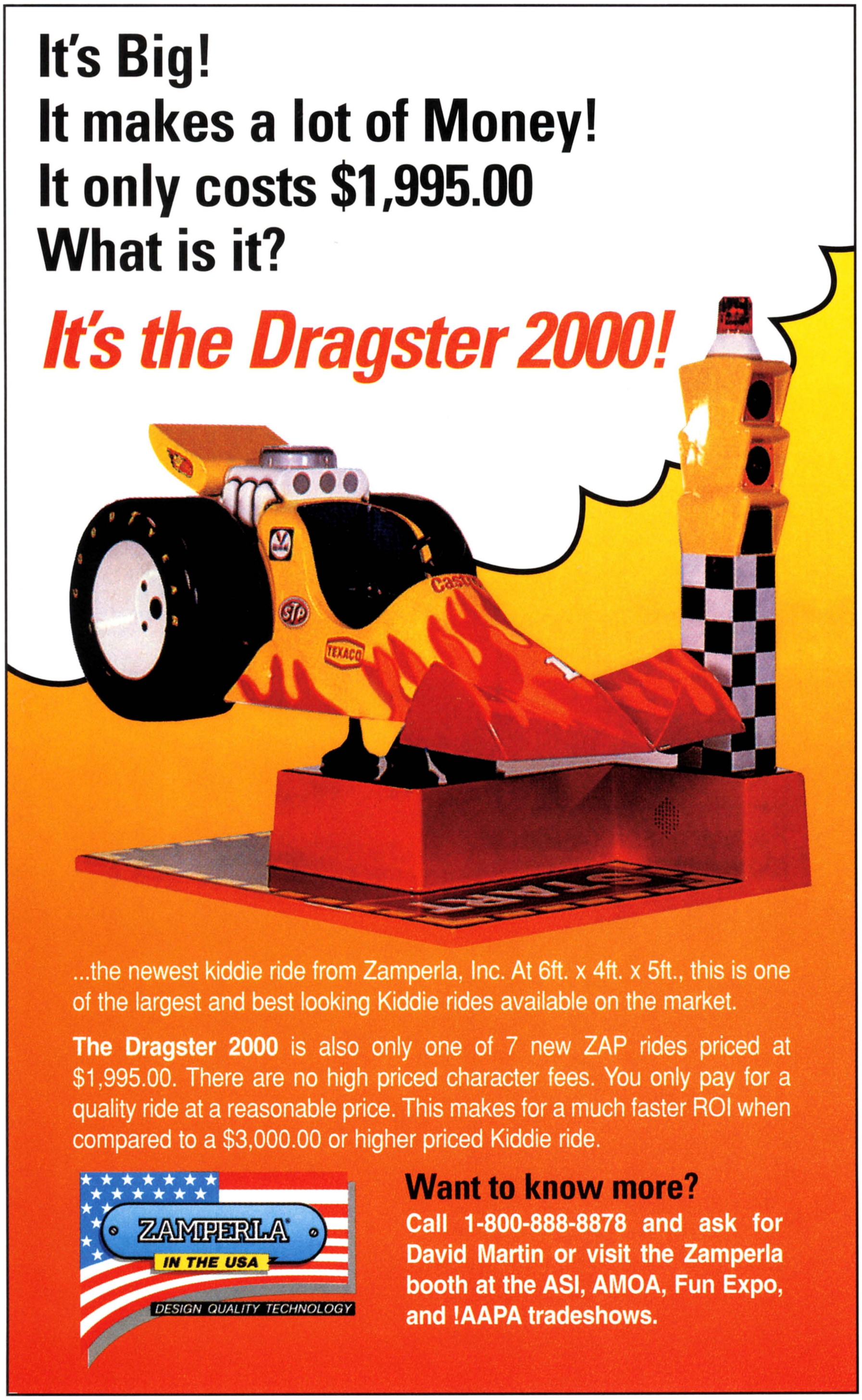
spiral operators. “One of the most critical considerations in operating spiral gumball machines is the product. Do not try to save money by buying discount product. We originally dealt with a company that let its quality control slip and we were having a lot of problems. We now buy from a company called Leaf that has a good product. But even knowing that it’s rare to find defective gumballs, we still take the time to take a quick look before putting them into the machines. You’re looking for gumballs that may be stuck together or ones that have a flat side. The machines are not overly sensitive, but it doesn’t hurt to think ahead.”

> **“PEOPLE LOVE THE MACHINES SO MUCH THAT SOMETIMES THEY DECIDE TO STEAL THE WHOLE THING!”**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It only costs $1,995.00
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The Dragster 2000 is also only one of 7 new ZAP rides priced at $1,995.00. There are no high priced character fees. You only pay for a quality ride at a reasonable price. This makes for a much faster ROI when compared to a $3,000.00 or higher priced Kiddie ride.

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Call 1-800-888-8878 and ask for David Martin or visit the Zamperla booth at the ASI, AMOA, Fun Expo, and !AAPA tradeshows.

Ostler added that you should ask questions if you’re using a credit card. “If you’re buying product with a credit card make sure the company does not run your VISA until they are ready to ship. We’ve had customers tell us they ordered product from companies that ran their VISA but didn’t actually send the product for 30 to 45 days. Check first.”

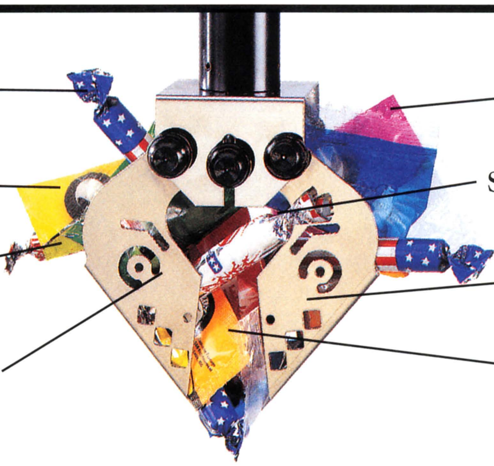
When ordering product for the machines, Church also warned against buying discounted gum. “If you buy discounted gum, there’s a chance it is already old. Old gum loses its moisture which causes it to shrink. Once it shrinks, the shell begins to crack. Then you have problems.”

He continued, “Don’t be afraid to ask questions about the product. How old is it? Has it been rained on? Has it gotten wet? Is the gum discontinued? Be alert. The older gum will be dimpled and won’t be completely round since it’s beginning to shrink. When you are filling the machines, be gentle with the gum. Let it go in nice and gentle.”

Church also told us that the standard size is one-inch in diameter and there are 850 in a box. “You can use 1-1/8 inch capsules or larger gumballs called Titan, but it’s not the standard. The standard 850-count gum will cost anywhere from $18 to $27 per box. But don’t try to skimp on quality even if you are saving what you think is a significant amount of money.”

Church added that because the machines are more common, the product could stay in the machine much longer. “Many are not filling their machines all the way to the top although gum will stay good for months. I recommend trying to have the product out in about three months. You really don’t want to keep it longer or it may get stale.”

Ostler talked about the expectations of what you can earn in a spiral machine. “Don’t be fooled by inflated promises. The machines are very steady and consistent making some-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where around $150 month. Most machines will be paid off in six to eight months. If you're used to dealing with video games where it's hot for a few months and then it's almost worthless, this will be vastly different. It's not a flash in the pan, but a stable earner. The product cost will be about eight percent of the total."

He added that an operator can negotiate with locations differently than with games since there is a consumable item involved. "While most locations are stuck with the 50 percent mindset, you can be consistent with that, but explain that the product cost will come off the top or some other such arrangement. Locations are usually willing to compromise, especially when they see the consistency in the machines. I usually tell my customers that if a machine isn't making at least $60, move it somewhere else."

Lucas offered that her going commission is 25 percent to the location.

Lucas strongly suggests that anyone looking to get into the business should be covered with insurance for the product as well as the machine. "What could happen? Let's say someone gets a gumball stuck in their throat. Or if someone is roughhousing and the machine falls on their foot. I've never had an incident but believe me they happen. As a rule, if you get corporate accounts like a Pizza Hut or a mall, for instance, they will require you to have certain limits and give them a certificate of insurance."

She continued, "Of course, you should have the proper licenses. Plus I have a bright sticker with our name and phone number on the machine in case there are any problems. It doesn't hurt to have your license number too. Not only is it handy if someone needs to contact you, it's publicity for your business. I've had several calls from those stickers. Another thing I do because I feel I owe it to the public is display a warning that the product is not recommended for children under three. If a parent feels like they want their young child to have the gum, that's their choice, but we've warned them."

As far as operating the spiral machines, Lucas outlined a few pointers. "Try to place the machine within the location where there is high traffic like where people are exiting or waiting in line such as a restaurant. Also, we offer our customers the 'winner game' that has been a tremendous hit. Here's how it works: say the machine holds 3,000 gumballs. Of that 24 or so will be stamped with 'winner.' When someone gets one of the winner balls, the location will give him a prize, something like an appetizer, dessert, T-shirt, or whatever. This promotion doesn't limit the appeal to teens and children. It entices adults too. We supply a colorful sign for the top of the machine promoting the winner game."

Ostler added another idea, "If you notice your revenue is slipping, you can go with a winner program or add flavored gum. There's strawberry, sour apple, horoscope gum, and specialty flavors like watermelon. The gum is colored like a strawberry or sour apple so it's appealing. This is especially true if you operate in locations like a grocery store where you have the same clientele. You have to merchandise your machines."

CHOOSING A MACHINE

They all look pretty much alike, but like our mothers always told us, it's what's inside that counts! We've basically looked at OK Mfg. and Global Mfg. machines to point out some of the features. It's not to say that these are the only two to consider. We encourage you to compare.

One of the first things to consider is the construction material used in any machine. Global machines are made of fiberglass instead of plastic, because as Church noted, plastic does not have that appealing shine. "Some say that plastic is more durable, but we haven't found that to be true."

OK uses a material called sycolaic, which Ostler claims is anti-scratch and holds its shine, virtually forever. "With both fiberglass and plastic there can be problems with the screws holding the mechanisms working their way out through wear and tear."

The coin mechanism of choice seems to be the Beaver, as both OK

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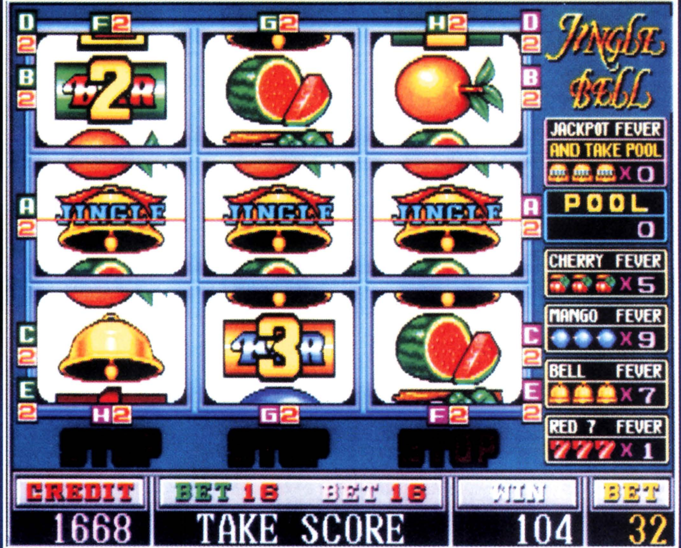
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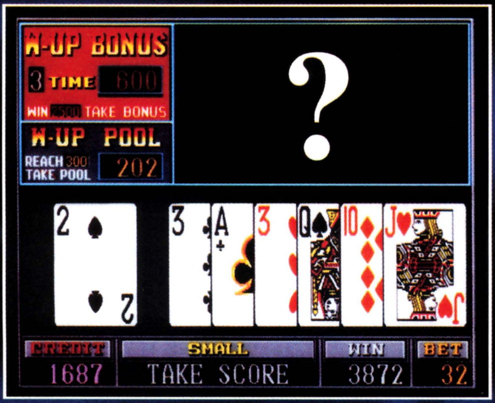
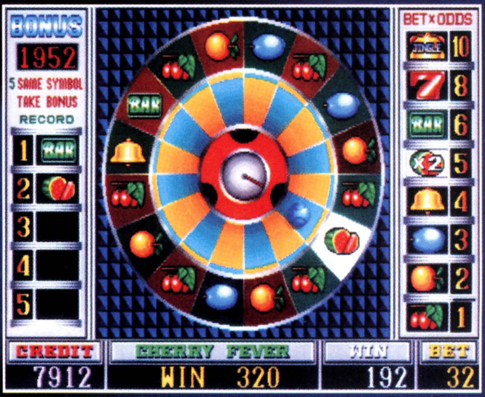
and

Fever Bonus

Features


W-UP BONUS
3 TIME 600
WIN TAKE BONUS
W-UP POOL
REACH 300 TAKE POOL 202
?
CREDIT 1687
SMALL
TAKE SCORE
WIN 3872
BET 32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and Global highly rate the Beaver mechanism. Both agree that when you see machines with cheaper hoppers and coin mechanisms, you could be looking at future trouble.

Consider the spiral itself. Is it a true spiral that takes the product about eight to 10 seconds to dispense? Some machines may feature what is called a disk drop, where the product simply drops from one plastic piece to another taking just three to four seconds to descend. The product in this scenario can be damaged while making its way to the hopper.

Church and Ostler both recommend taking a concerned look at the cash door. "Don't go with a pop out cash door. Look for the hinged type for security," Church advises.

Other features on the Global machines include a center rod running from the base to the hat (on top of the globe). "Without it," Church noted, "if you pick up the machine by the globe you could pull the globe completely off. It's a key factor for strength and durability in a machine." The Global machine also allows the operator to remove the globe without removing all of the gum.

Ostler outlined some of the key features of the OK machines including the gears being properly sanded down to give smooth operation, metal plates on the backside of the base so screws holding the mechanisms do not work their way out, a gumball stop both on the chute and the drop hole so the gumball is not propelled out onto the floor, and a weight baffle. "This baffle," Ostler explained, "takes the weight off the handle. With no baffle, it can be hard to turn the mechanism."

He added, "All of the improvements we've made over the years were done because someone had a problem. It could be from a simple thing like adding an L bracket so the lock can't be popped off to something more serious. But our machines are the evolution of improvements."

Sweet Sensations' Lucas told us that people love the machines so much that sometimes they decide to steal the whole thing! Look to see if there is a sand plug that allows the operator to fill it with sand, kitty litter, or buckshot. It's a little harder to haul away. Also you may want your machines to have an eyebolt in the back so it can be secured to a wall like the OK machines have.

When choosing a machine, your locations and needs will be the foundation for what you ultimately use. Since you can expect to pay anywhere from $150 to $2,000 for a spiral machine, you can decide on options or pass. But everyone we talked with said over and over that these machines have a life span of many years so saving a few dollars on your initial investment could cost you dearly later. Look for quality in both the machine and the product.

MAINTENANCE

Now here's the good part about operating spiral machines. They don't take a lot of maintenance. Everyone we talked to agreed that the most pressing concern is to make sure the globe gets cleaned on a regular basis. The spiral itself only needs to be thoroughly cleaned about once a year depending on the use. This is where using a quality gumball product makes sense. Inferior gumballs can leave residue in the machine causing problems.

Lucas said she cleans the outside of her machines at least every month with windex and paper towels. She recommends going armed with glue remover for those tough heel marks or scuffs where the floor polisher bumped into it. When the machines are due for their annual cleaning, she simply removes the machine from a location and replaces it with another so there is no down time.

Ostler emphasized that there is very little maintenance on the machines, but offered some valuable advice.. "Operators can expect to fill the machine and collect the money. But too many simply clean and wipe. I suggest that operators let the manager know he's there, talk with him, ask if there are any problems. In other words, work your customers." ▲

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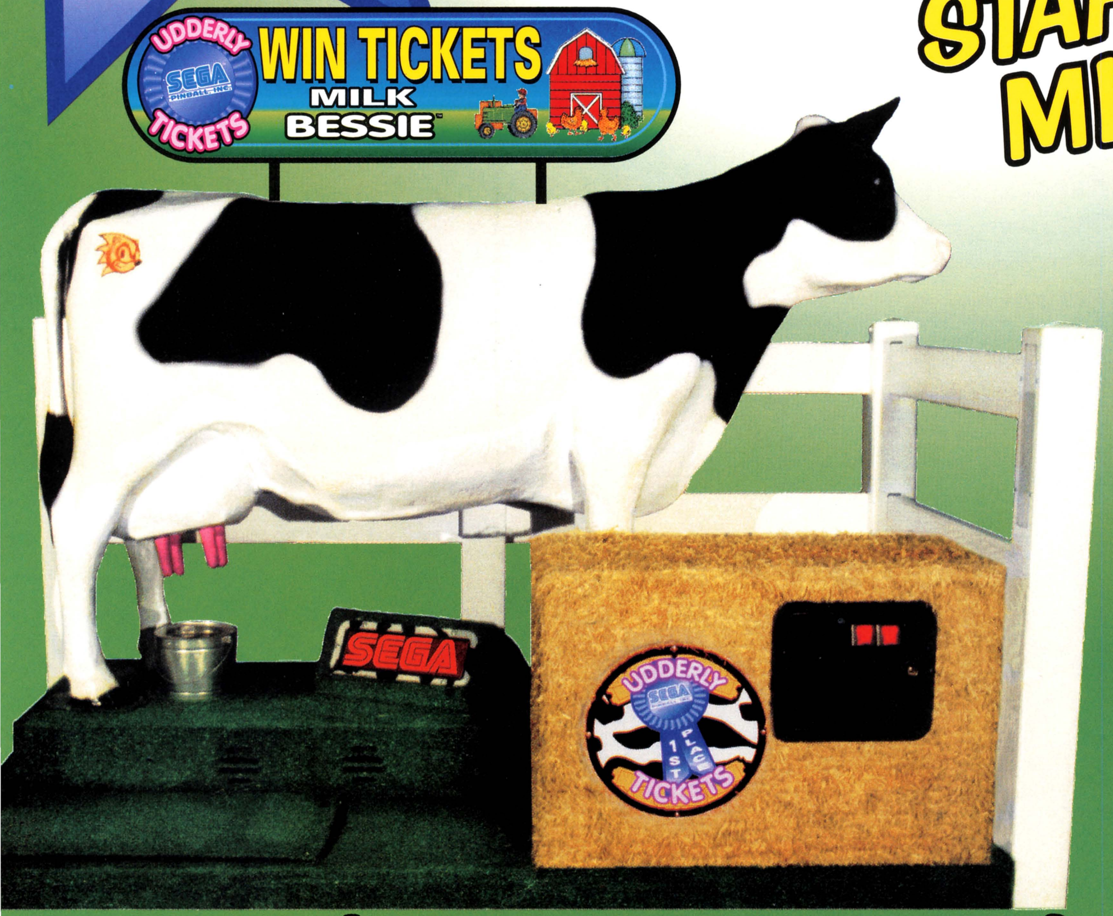

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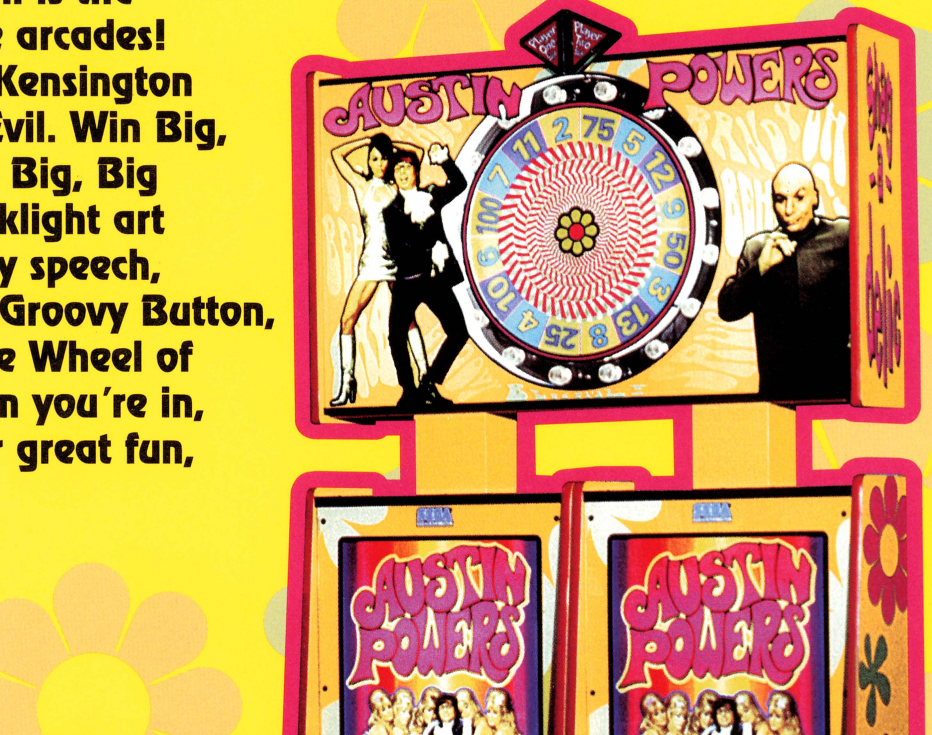
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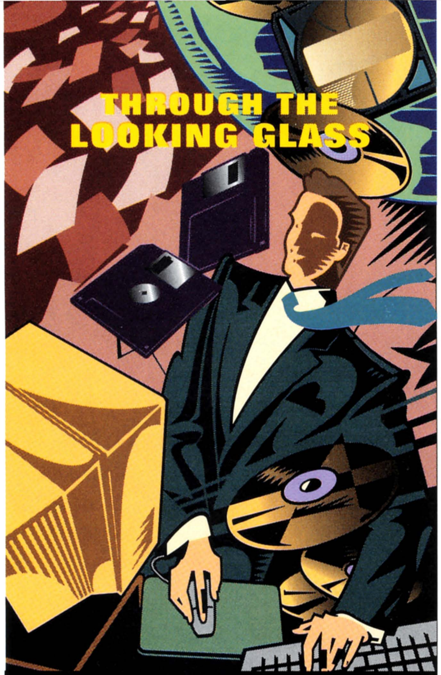
THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS



STEVE WHITE

OPEN ARCADE INITIATIVE

moves into second phase

IF 1997 WAS THE YEAR FOR EARLY ADOPTERS OF THE PERSONAL COMPUTER (PC) AS AN ENGINE FOR DRIVING COMMERCIALLY OPERATED VIDEO GAMES, THIS YEAR SHOULD SEE THE FIRST CROP OF VIABLE TITLES READY FOR THE MARKETPLACE, OR AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT PROPONENTS OF THE PLATFORM ARE PREDICTING.

“This year we are focusing more on traditional arcade games and planning for 20 titles,” said Intel's director of arcade development Albert Teng. “Ten should be titles adapted from existing home titles and 10 designed specifically for the arcade. One year is a very aggressive schedule—even with a game engine complete—for development of a title.”

Market signs appear to bear that thinking out with many smaller trailblazers like HanaHo Arcade PC and Interactive Light being joined by larger players such as computer manufacturer Compaq, a new member of the Open Arcade Architecture Forum (OAAF), and software/game publisher Acclaim.

While Interactive Light took the lead last year in producing *Kick-It*, a traditional, if deluxe, arcade-style piece, at least four other companies introduced attractions designed for the location-based entertainment (LBE) market including LBE Technologies' *NASCAR Silicon Motor Speedway*; Mango Grits' *Barage* released in partnership with Jesler Enterprises; MaxFlight's 360-degree flying game exhibited at IAAPA, and the Vivid Group's newest virtual reality theater experience.

Computer chip manufacturer Intel has been largely responsible for promoting the PC—and its Pentium II chip—as a platform for coin-op and LBE attractions, and Teng said the role will continue for the foreseeable future.

“The arcade program is now very well supported inside Intel,” he explained. “At first it was really a one-man show, Albert Teng trying to evangelize. But now I have a lot of resources and support because people see this as a launching pad for future high-end applications. We will continue to provide enabling technologies and be the cheerleader for progress. “One such enabling technology is a software developers kit (SDK) Intel plans to introduce at this year's Computer Game Developer's Conference, May 5-7, in Long Beach, Calif. The SDK was developed by members of the OAAF including Interactive Light, Happ Controls, Microsoft, and Quantum3D. Future plans for the kit include operator-friendly features that

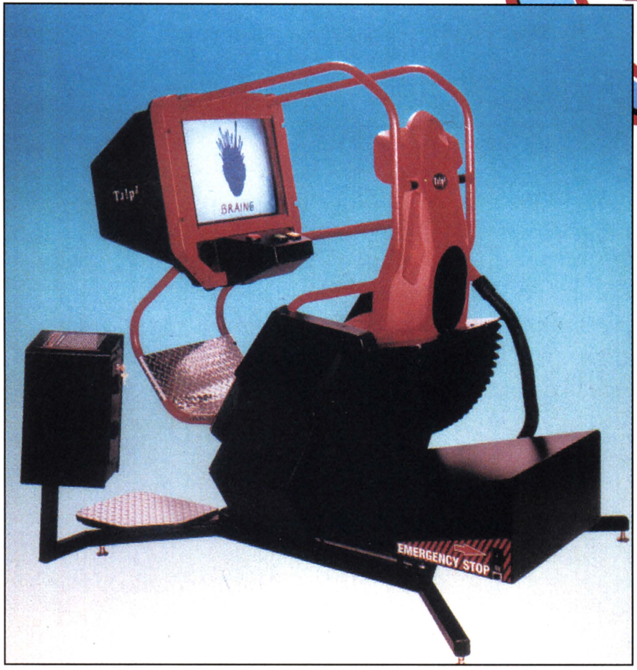
Both Acclaim and BrainCo are utilizing versions of Psygnosis' title *WipeOut*.

will track game play, control difficulty levels, etc.

The first phase of the SDK will help familiarize developers with Windows programming for the arcade. “They can easily support all the input devices for the arcade without changing the way they do programming,” Teng said, noting that game peripheral set-up at AMOA caused a number of headaches. “Why should the developer go through that if they don’t have to. We are making a big step forward from the foundation point of view. We are trying to lower the risk of all the players coming into this market.”

Plane Crazy

Above: One of the first PC-based arcade games exhibited at a trade show, *Plane Crazy*, is slated for release this year by the Scottish development firm Inner Workings.



Below: Newly-formed BrainCo recently introduced its PC-based, interactive motion simulator, *Trip2*.

According to Teng, the partnerships long predicted by Microsoft and Intel between PC and arcade game companies are beginning to take shape. In fact, the horizontal model of the industry that has emerged includes computer hardware manufacturers, software developers for both operating systems and content/games, software publishers (a category that has yet to take much public interest in the arcade industry), coin-op or LBE manufacturers, system or technology integrators, distributors, and operators.

“More and more people are working together,” Teng claimed. I always use the example of Michael Jordan who is the best basketball player in history. He tried to play baseball and he didn’t do very well. In the arcade industry there are many layers and some companies are trying to play all layers at the same time.

“Intel is not good at all things; Intel is the Michael Jordan of microprocessors,” he continued. “Under the new model, each player is good at different layers. All of a sudden companies that do everything at every layer become one of six or seven horizontal layers and there are multiple players at each layer competing against one another. That was missing in the arcade market. We really believe that it will have to go through a chaotic change, but at the very end the innovation and choice will really help the industry.”

Intel predicts initial upright PC game systems will be priced somewhere around $6,000, while LBE game platforms will go for approximately $12,000.

GAMES ON THE WAY

One of the biggest announcements of the trade show season last fall was the imminent release of the id Software’s home hit Quake by Richardson, Texas,-based Location Based Entertainment Systems on its SparkyNet system.

The arcade version of the game, scheduled for last month, runs on a Pentium II, 266 MHz computer with Quantum3D’s highest end 3Dfx Obsidian class board. Operator costs for a one-player unit were expected to be about $6,000. Four-player pod setups will cost about $20,000.

SparkyNet allows multiple Intel-based arcade machines to be networked within a location and eventually between. The SparkyNet team was reportedly talking to a major long-distance carrier about the creation of a connection backbone set to be operational by the end of this year.

Another major player to emerge as part of the Arcade PC initiative is Acclaim Coin-Op, which introduced its first coin-op titles at the last ACME show in 1996. In addition to the JAMMA-convertible two-player shooting kit *Judge Dredd*, Acclaim introduced its first PC-based title, *WipeOut Arcade*, at late January’s ATEI show in London..

Wipeout Arcade, developed by Psygnosis, is an anti-gravity driving game which is available in one- to eight-player linkup versions for arcades. The game includes a choice of eight anti-

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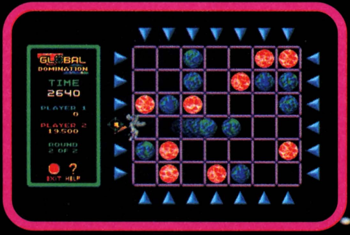
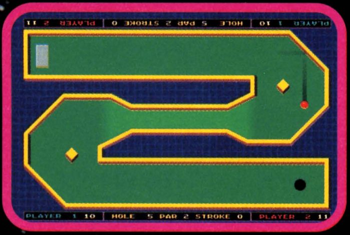

GLOBAL DOMINATION
TIME
2640
PLAYER 1
PLAYER 2
ROUND
2 OF 2
EXIT HELP

GLOBAL DOMINATION

Push planets to get 4
in a row and win!


PLAYER 1 10
HOLE 5 PAR 2 STROKE 0
PLAYER 2 11

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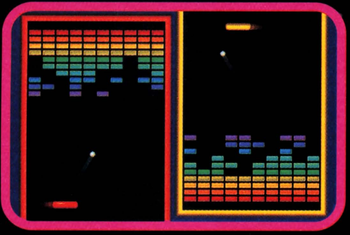

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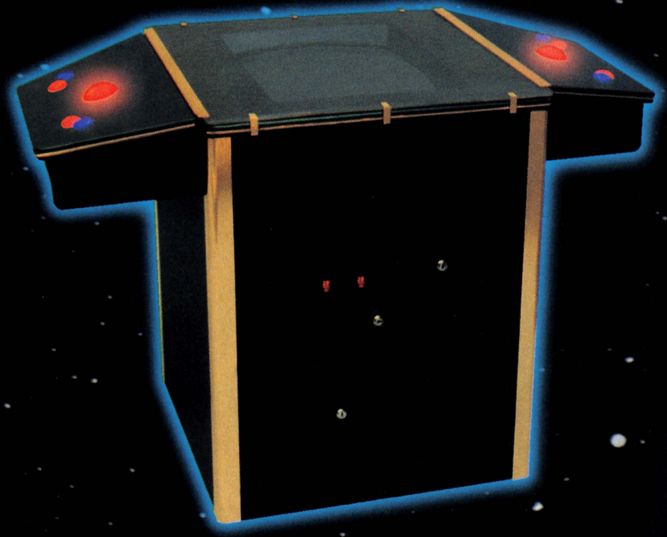

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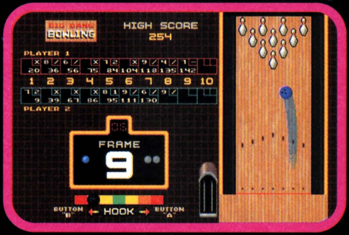
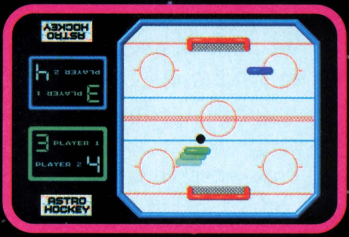

BIG BANG BOWLING
HIGH SCORE
254
PLAYER 1
PLAYER 2
FRAME
9
BUTTON B
HOOK
BUTTON A

BIG BANG BOWLING

Ten full frames of strikes
and spares!


ASTRO HOCKEY
PLAYER 1
PLAYER 2

ASTRO HOCKEY

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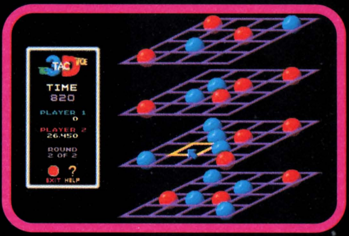
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PLAYER 2
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2 OF 2
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gravity aircraft, six 3D racing tracks, 3D graphics, and various weapons including heat-seeking missiles, rockets, mines, shields, and shock waves.

Acclaim also showed future games currently in development, both on computer and in cabinets. These include titles featuring football, 4 x 4 driving, and speedboat racing action.

Acclaim Arcade PC is a universal system for arcades which allows operators to change CDs, rather than cartridges, provided by Acclaim, for half the price of a conventional PCB, according to the company. The system is fully convertible by changing the control panels, top flash, and CD. Acclaim is currently working with several game developers including Gremlin, Psygnosis, Probe, and Iguana.

Acclaim also announced a partnership with Quantum3D to utilize its PC-based computing platform Quicksilver, which provides a completely integrated computer system tailored for the out-of-home market. Quicksilver is based on the Intel OAA specifications and was designed by Quantum3D for cost-sensitive visual computing applications including coin-op, LBE, visual simulation, and training.

"This method is easier and cheaper than PCBs and cartridges with the longevity and upgradeability of a PC," said Acclaim's Coin-Op Entertainment sales director Leon Deith. "Using the Quicksilver system our Arcade PC will launch an exciting new arcade game, the first in a whole new generation of graphically advanced and varied titles on a changeable PC system."

Arcade PC pioneer Inner Workings of Scotland, which first showed its flying adventure game *Plane Crazy* at the first ASI show last year, is also scheduled to release the same title this spring, most likely as a tournament game for the AMOA-backed National Amusement Network Inc.(NANI), according to the British-based trade publication *AB Europe*.

Lesley Keen, managing director at Inner Workings, told *AB Europe* the development process has been more complicated than expected. In Europe, the consumer version of the title may be released before the arcade game comes out. Inner Workings has reserved all rights to the title and made no announcements regarding distribution for the out-of-home market.

"Everything is up for grabs but people have to be quite flexible," Keen told *AB Europe*. "It will be interesting to see what business model emerges in the end...We've pinned our colors to the mast on this one."

A fourth company planning to release a PC-based arcade title this spring is virtual reality game designer GreyStone Technology, which exhibited versions of its *XS-G* (initially named *Canyon Runner*) game at IAAPA `97. *XS-G*, a futuristic flying/racing game, is being supplied to operators by the company's partner, Dynamo Interactive. The title is also being utilized by Thomson Entertainment for its newly released, two-person interactive motion simulator, the Venturer S2i.

"GreyStone's site at ASI will be right next to Dynamo's booth," the company's Dave Klugh told *Play Meter*. "The game contains three different courses: beginner, intermediate, and advanced. It will be shown on four sit-down networked platforms and three stand-up cabinets."

One company not planning to introduce arcade titles this year is consumer powerhouse Angel Studios. However, the company is currently working on plans for the arcade and LBE markets and has scheduled game releases for the spring of 1999. Angel showed several prospective titles in the Intel booth at AMOA Expo `97.

"There aren't any big outstanding issues from our end; it looks like it can work," said Angel's Brad Hunt. "It's not a creative issue or technical issue and it shouldn't be a business issue. We are working with distributors. We've seen the latest Sega technology and we can smoke that."

MOTION-BASED ATTRACTIONS

The ability to create reusable motion platforms that will function similarly to universal kits has been one of the standards long promised by proponents of a PC platform, and a number of high-end suppliers like LBE Technologies and Evans & Sutherland have already brought the concept to fruition.

Several companies have also designed single-seat, interactive simulators for operators or arcades and family entertainment centers. They include the aforementioned Jesler Enterprises; Stricor Inc., which presented its PC-based Xtreme Voodoo simulator at last year's Fun Expo; and motion platform manufacturer VIRtogo Inc., which has introduced games for its FunPrint unit from three exclusive developers: Entropy Engineering, Total Illusion, and New Luna L.C.

Its newest software title from Entropy, *Treasure Hunt,* will be aimed at the preteen market, a demographic often ignored by the video game industry, according to VIRtogo sales manager Lorna Brody.

"The children try to guide their fat wheel vehicles through various terrain and landscapes, collecting treasures along the way, and learn how to use a joystick and navigate a map at the same time," Brody explained. "The children can use the machines and software networked together to challenge each other or work collectively, all the while enjoying VIRtogo's six degrees of freedom motion hardware."

One new player with a motion simulation experience for the arcade is Mountain View, Calif.,-based BrainCo. The company introduced its single-player, interactive *Trip2* simulator in late January at ATEI.

Trip2, developed in conjunction with OAAF member Streak Technlogy, supports porting for all Windows 95 games and demonstrated Psygonsis' *WipeOut XL* at the London show.

"This new simulator arrives at a time when the lines between arcade and home video games are blurring," said BrainCo president Bertus Meijer. "Now entertainment locations can have the latest and best entertainment software since any Windows 95 game

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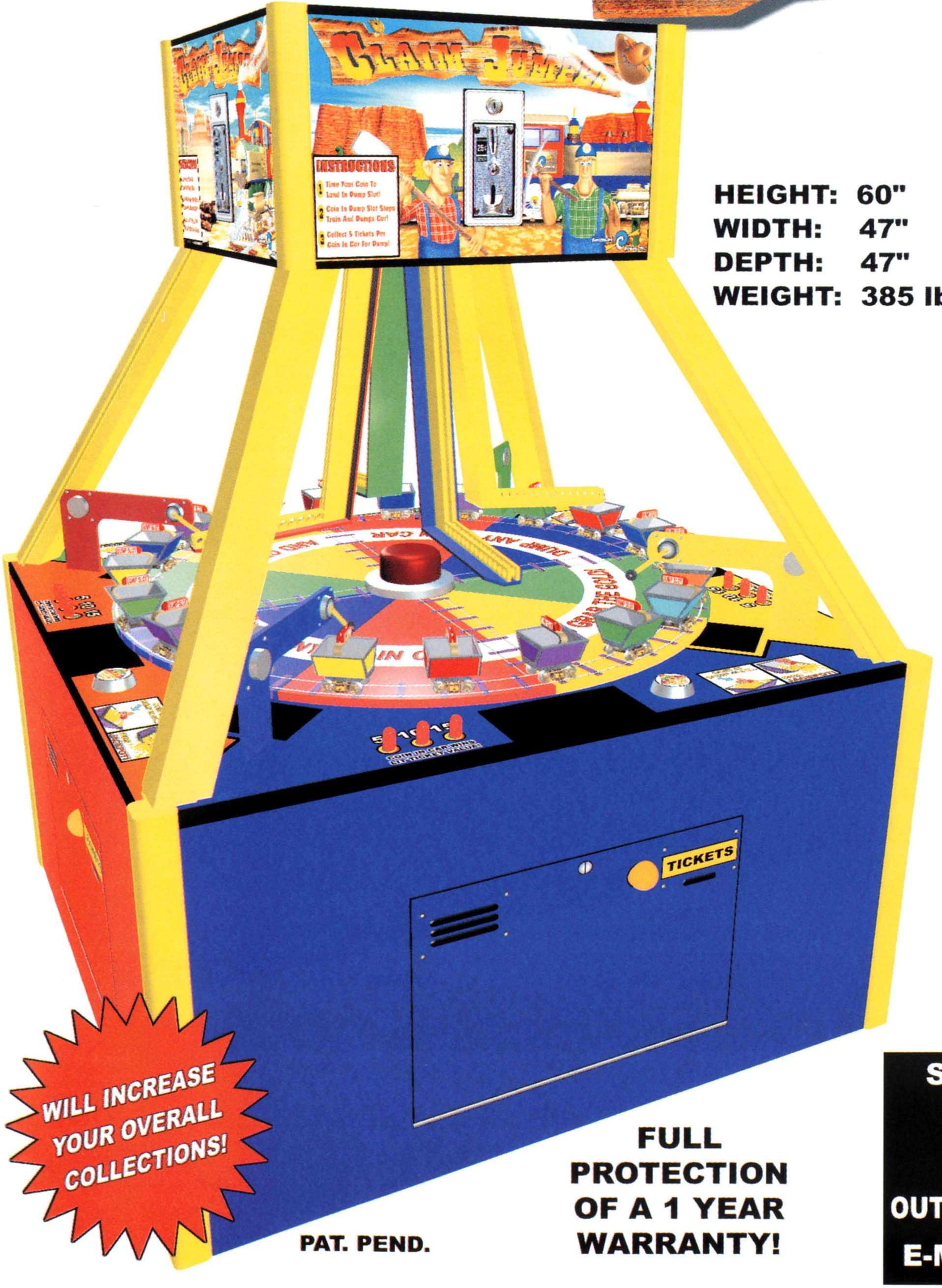

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Trip2 features a proprietary motion base, digital sounds and rumble effect, structural modularity, themeable graphics flexibility, a small footprint, and easy portability. Multiplatform expansion or linking is possible through local area networks.

NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

Another great promise of the PC platform is, in fact, the ability to network games. A number of companies including LBE Systems and BrainCo have introduced product that can be linked across several locations. Not surprisingly, one of the earliest proponents of networking video games, NANI, is expected to finally fulfill its own promise this year as well.

"It needs to be made clear that NANI is not a unique iteration of the PC in coin-op, but merely an add-in to existing strategies," explained co-founder John Klayh of TVPhone in Canada. "In the near future it will be possible to run any PC based coin-op game and have separate access to NANI services, through a standard set of API's that OAAF members are creating.

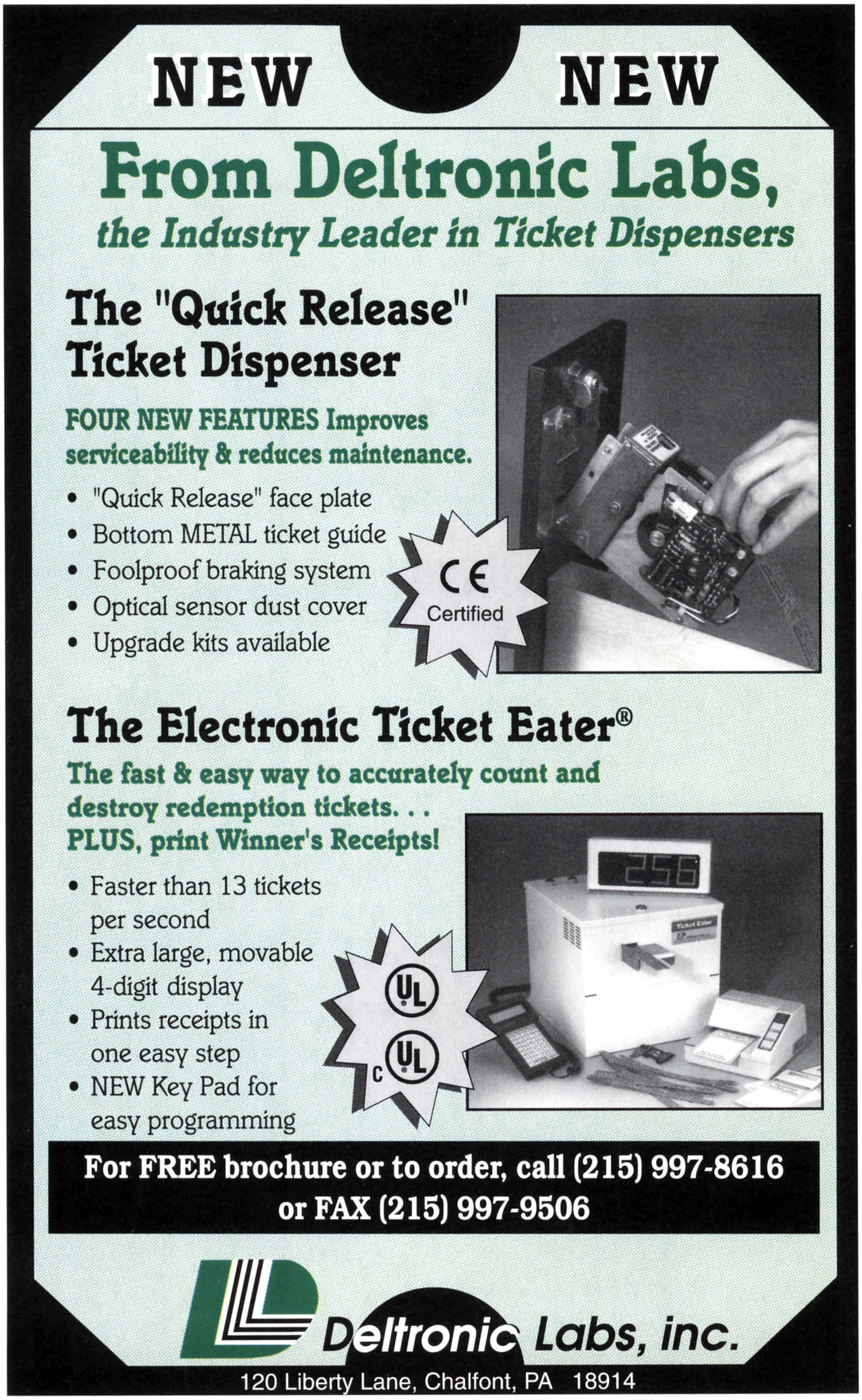
"Having said that, however, NANI has approximately 30 to 40 games that are being developed for the Public PC platform. Many are smaller games like *Tournament Solitaire,* although there is a major initiative to create higher level games specifically for the arcade by a number of firms."

NANI is currently in the midst of a drive to advertise the advantages of building games for coin-op to all game developers. As part of that effort, representatives of NANI have appeared at two one-day conferences sponsored by the Computer Game Developer's Association.

NANI-compatible Public PC units were scheduled to be available this month. A number of companies including computer giant Compaq, which is supplying PC component systems to several developers in the arcade market, as well as Fun Company and others both inside and outside the industry plan on providing complete systems.

According to Klayh, kits could be available for as little as $2,000, while full systems will sell from $3,500 to $6,000. A number of economic models are also being considered including revenue-sharing and charging only nominal costs for games in order to promote them in out-of-home entertainment venues. NANI also plans to sell advertising on Public PC units.

"One software company we are dealing with is working on a series of titles it plans to make available to operators with no upfront fee on a revenue-share basis; they are talking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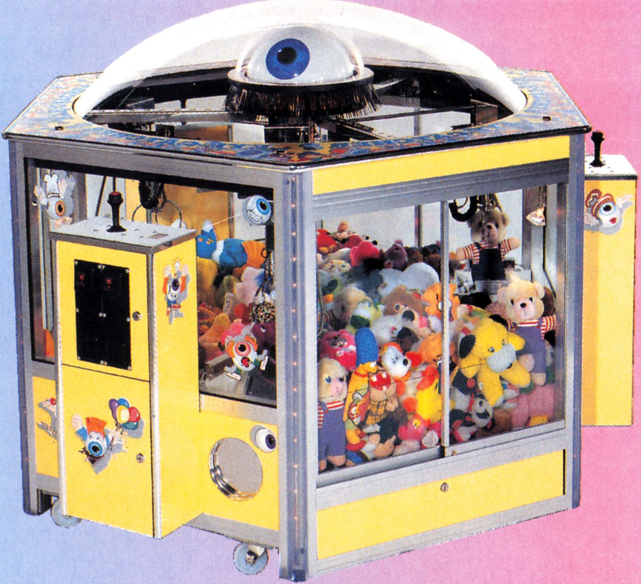

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about a fee of two or three cents per play," said Klayh. "Another company wants $3 to $100 per copy for their games. And others want from $500 to $1,000 for a major title."

When asked how NANI's technology compares and/or contrasts with Intel's plans for the coin-op industry, Klayh said Intel's OAAF specification is designed to support one game per machine. NANI is compliant with this specification.

"However, NANI then goes well beyond the low level spec to provide many additional revenue streams that require more complex systems," he added. "Recently the key members of the OAAF, including NANI, agreed to create a common set of drivers and interfaces for the PCs used in coin-op so that operators would not get taken advantage of and be locked into proprietary solutions. Operators will therefore be able to pick and choose whose games and services they want to offer on the game machines they own."

Another recent member of the OAAF is the aptly named DWANGO (Dial-Up Area Wide Network Game Operation), which is owned and operated by Houston-based Interactive Visual Systems Corp. DWANGO provides high-speed transfer of data making interactive, real-time game play a reality for consumers.

As part of their plans for the future, a number of OAAF members have expressed enthusiasm over the possibility of leveraging DWANGO's technology in the out-of-home market for tournament and interactive game play experiences. ▲

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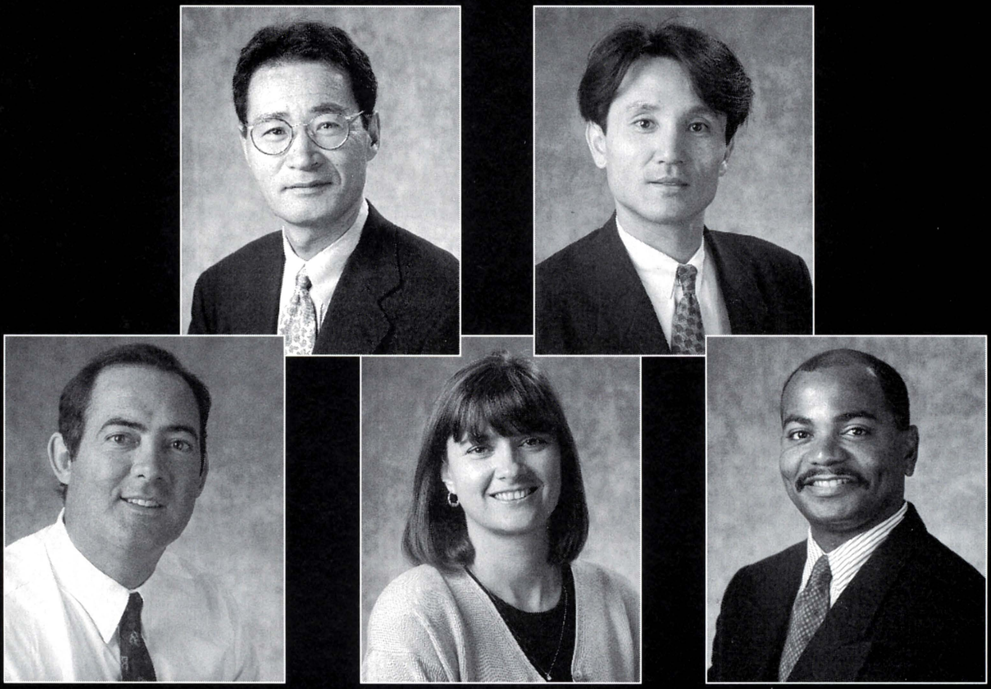
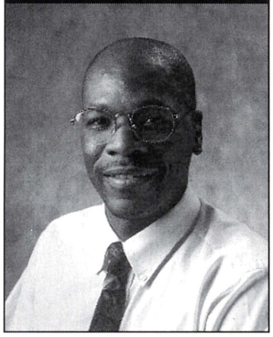
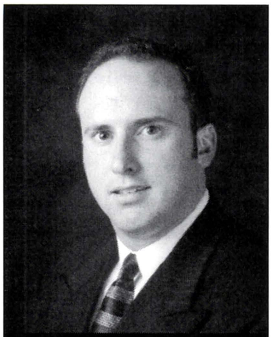


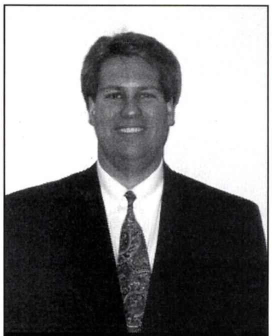
TOP LEFT: President Yoshikazu Jinno;
TOP RIGHT: Executive vice president of administration Mitsuhiro Tanaka
BOTTOM LEFT: Executive vice president John Barone
BOTTOM MIDDLE: General manager Susan Barone
BOTTOM RIGHT Director of sales Tim Jackson

Technical manager Darryl Williams





Eastern regional sales manager Jeff Yantz



Sales, Marty Mann Smith

Sales, Teresa Rivas

Today there are over 50,000 original Neo-Geos in the United States and North America and a million worldwide. But even with all the success Neo-Geo has had, SNK realized that it was time for an updated version. The company has been refining the Hyper Neo-Geo for two years, opting to delay the release rather than selling it before its time, so to speak. But from what the industry buzz indicates, it was worth the wait.

SNK's history in coin-op began in Japan as a company specializing in hand-held video games. Finding a receptive market in Japan, SNK soon migrated to the United States and started SNK Electronics Corp. In the '80s the company viewed hand-held video games as a way to enter the market and then evolve into coin-op video games as well.

As the years passed SNK began producing upright video games either in dedicated or conversion kit form. There were games like *Mechanized Attack, Beast Busters, P.O.W.,* and others that were successful. But it was the introduction of the Neo-Geo system in 1988 that truly put SNK on the industry map. Even though the industry had collective doubts, SNK knew a system allowing operators to convert games by using cartridges would eventually be embraced by the operating community. Once the operator made the initial investment, he could then simply add new games as they were introduced. The concept in 1988 was to help operators lessen the impact of having to purchase dedicated games or costly conversion kits. Operators were looking at a fraction of the cost with a Neo-Geo.

Operators often said they figured that it just wasn't possible to buy a really good game for a system and held fast to that belief when Neo-Geo made its debut. It took awhile, but SNK soon dissolved that notion. We certainly don't have room to mention all the Neo-Geo hits but how about the *Samurai Shodown* series, *King of Fighters, Metal Slug, Fatal Fury,* and *Bust-A-Move*, to name a few. SNK prides itself in offering a cross section of games for all types of players.

OK, the original Neo-Geo was all SNK promised and probably even more, but can the company do it again? As the mid-'90s approached and the company focused its considerable resources on developing a new system, it's hard to come up with a reason it shouldn't make as great, if not an even greater, impact on the coin machine industry with the new system.

The Hyper Neo-Geo system will have four times the capacity of the original, expanding the opportunity for even more exciting, fun games. The idea is to make available three different platforms in popular categories of video game entertainment. The first is the driving version of Hyper Neo-Geo 64 with the first game, *Road's Edge*. By June of this year, another "driver" will be released for this platform. The second entry is the fighting/adventure game platform and the first game is *Samurai Shodown 64*. The third platform, planned to be introduced this month at ASI in Las Vegas, is the gun platform. It will enable operators to have games that feature machine guns, rifles, etc. By April or May all three should be available.

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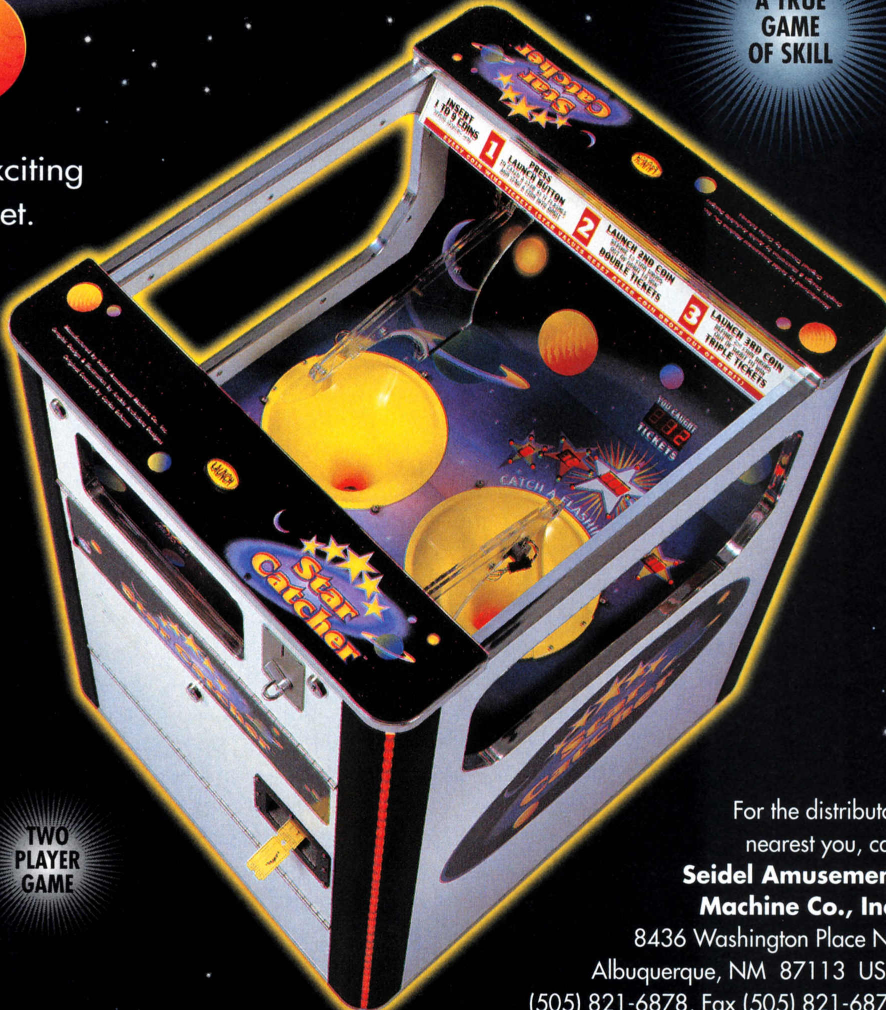
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no one would question a move to discontinue introducing new titles for it. But that's not the way SNK does business. Director of sales Tim Jackson explained: "SNK is continuing to support the original Neo-Geo as long as there is a demand for product. We do not have any plans to conclude developing titles for the system. With so many out in the market, we are planning eight pieces of software a year for the original system."

Everyone at SNK has been diligent in seeking out and listening to comments from operators and distributors. We were curious about what they were hearing. Jackson said, "I'll be specific in the comments we're hearing. Our top distributors and many operators tell us that SNK has proven to be the leader in the development of system-based games and software. We have clearly been able to demonstrate through the availability of software that SNK has fulfilled its commitment to operators. There was some initial reluctance after other systems did not live up to expectations. But operators soon got the picture that SNK was in it for the long haul and would support the software. Neo-Geo 64 is no different."

Jackson continued, "SNK went further in meeting operator expectations when it came out with the single slot cartridge-based system in 1990. Originally, SNK was selling the four- or six-slot version. This single was a universal conversion kit and it opened even more opportunities for operators."

We could talk indefinitely about SNK's prior success. But that's past history, and although it's an impressive story and did, in fact, lay a strong foundation for the future, it's that future that we want to investigate. SNK has assembled a team of industry experts to lead the campaign for the Hyper Neo-Geo 64. You've met them here in *Play Meter's* pages and seen them around the industry for many years. Executive vice president John Barone was with SNK in 1988 when the original Neo-Geo hit the market. His vast experience in the industry as well as with SNK made him the ideal choice to introduce the new Neo-Geo. "It is a real privilege to be a part of the new SNK. One of our primary objectives is to do whatever possible to make Neo-Geo 64 affordable for all," said Barone.

John's wife, the former Susan Jarocki, grew up in the industry. Her dad Stan and brother Jim held a number of positions with various companies. Susan, too, has years of experience. She is SNK's general manager.

And, Jackson, who was with the original SNK when it first came to the United States, is probably one of the most dynamic personalities in the industry. His enthusiasm is contagious and he's learned firsthand that having a great product to sell is only part of the equation. "A great product is paramount to any company, but I can say without hesitation that if there is not great service and support to go hand in hand with the product, success will be just out of reach. That's why we feel so good about having Darryl Williams heading up the service area. In fact, service will be crucial in the success of Neo-Geo 64. We want to be recognized for our service after the sale as much as for our quality products. We're also delighted that Neal Zook, an original member of the SNK team, has returned to support Darryl in this area."

SNK couldn't have found a more capable person to take up the challenge of overseeing service needs. Williams has been in the industry for many years and had this to say: "When you say service, it could be understood as support. We will expand our efforts to support our customers. We are evaluating ways to bring 64-bit coin-op technology to the market in ways which are both economical and fun. Technology is always moving and we think SNK is 'the way to play.' We have proven we can support a system with software, and to aid us in product development, we will continue to listen to what the industry needs. Soon we will visit select regions of our country to get re-acquainted with our friends and talk about this new system. This will help us understand current operating conditions and the level of support required."

Rounding out the SNK team are industry veterans Jeff Yantz, Marty Mann Smith, and Teresa Rivas. Yantz is certainly excited about the future of SNK. He said, "It's definitely a different atmosphere at SNK in 1998! It's the beginning of the new Hyper Neo-Geo 64 product line and new titles are still coming for the original Neo-Geo. With so much going on, I am looking forward to working with my North-

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Marty Mann Smith, who recently joined the team, offered these thoughts: "SNK is poised to be the leader in creating and supplying the entertainment and amusement industry with the best source of profit-generating equipment available for the next 10 years. It's a privilege to be a part of such a company, and I look forward to working with all the Southeastern distributors. The experience I gathered while working in distribution will be valuable in understanding their needs as well as assisting in their sales efforts.

"I've made many friends in this industry, many of them street operators. I accepted this position in part because of SNK's responsiveness to this cornerstone group of the industry. By providing a low-cost method of getting up-to-date quality equipment, SNK offers operators a way to see an excellent return on their investment. The new Hyper Neo-Geo 64 is a continuation of that commitment, not only to street operators but FECs all over the world."

Sales administrator Teresa Rivas, the newest member of the team, added, "I feel very lucky to be with a company with such integrity. SNK has the ability and the attitude to become one of the most successful game companies in the 21st century. With the great new team we have on board we can't go wrong."

MEETING THE MARKET

This impressive team has embarked on a daunting task to be in touch with the market. The mission statement would be simple: in conjunction with distributors, SNK will go head-to-head with operators in their own areas to find out their needs, how SNK can improve products and service, and generally be more aware of how to expand the marketplace. Well, maybe it's not so simple, but SNK knows it's a necessary commitment to assuring its own success.

Jackson said, "One of the things is to educate operators on the virtues of our new Neo-Geo 64 system as well as pointing out the continuing opportunities with the original system. Our plan is to have at least three representatives in the field to provide information about new software and ways to maximize income, and to let operators know we're there to address any and all concerns."

SNK is geared up for the future, and that includes new facilities in the San Jose area. One 27,000-square-foot building, SNK U.S. Technologies, will be dedicated to developing new products for North America. Another 25,000-square-foot building next door will be home to the sales, marketing, and administration. As Jackson shared, the development team will be working on an array of products in addition to the Neo-Geo software. Examples would be the *Neo-Print*, a photo sticker machine many have seen at trade shows, a voice recorder vending machine (likely to be previewed at ASI), and other redemption offerings.

"We recognize that our core business is video games, but we want to branch out with products that will complement each other. We'll be expanding very carefully with vending or redemption; we will not limit ourselves. After visiting with distributors and operators, we feel confident that we are in tune with our customers and their customers as well," Jackson said.

As operators become more and more conscientious about their dollars and return on investment they will be looking for and needing system-based games. System games will be an integral part of operators' businesses. Once they've made that initial investment, they will be able to upgrade and add new games easily—and more important—affordably. As Jackson points out, "Big simulators will always have their place and operators shouldn't ignore them. But street operators have unique needs and SNK is addressing those needs better than ever." ▲

From left: John Barone, Yoshikazu Jinno, Susan Barone, Eli Davalos, Mitsuhiro Tanaka, Tim Jackson, Darryl Williams, and Jeff Yantz.

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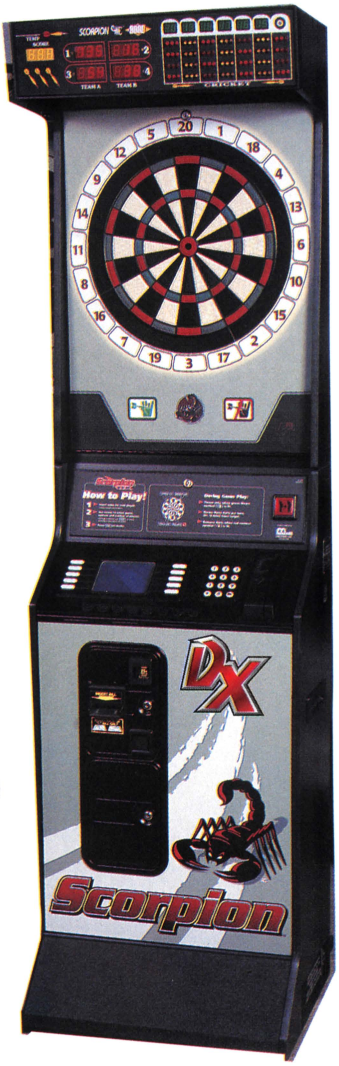

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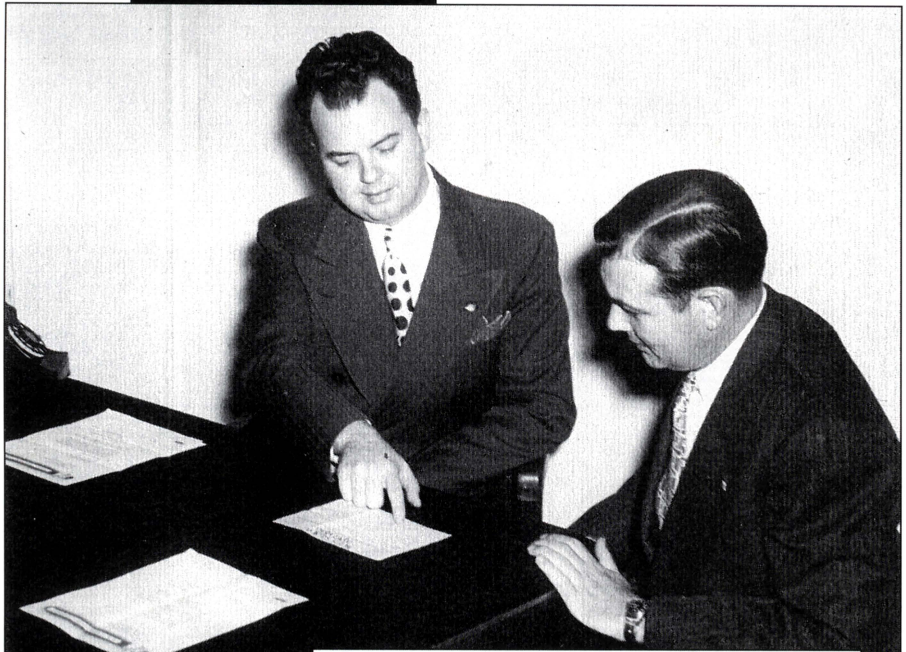

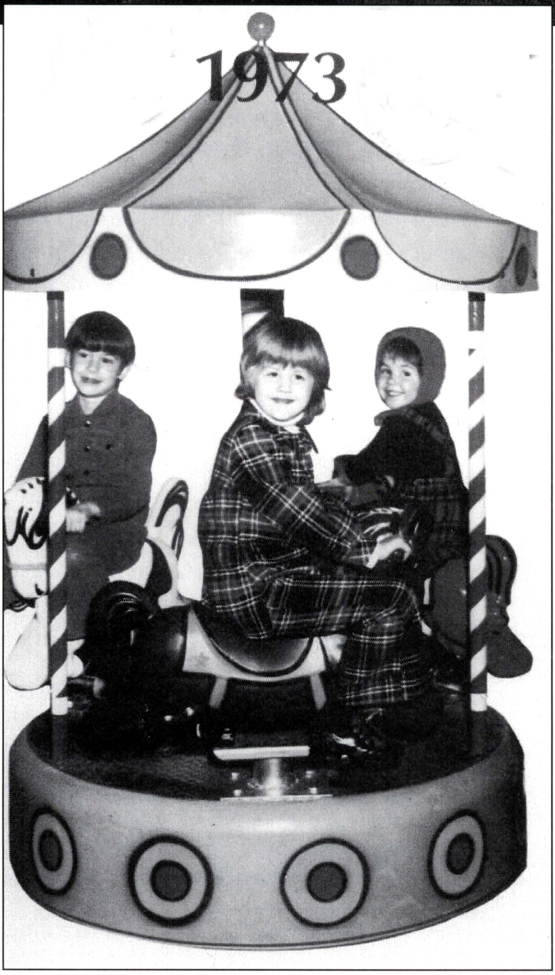

TOP: Norwood Veatch Sr. looking over correspondence with his assistant in his early years in the coin-op industry.

BOTTOM: Steven Veatch was just six when he was pictured on Carousel's first color brochure.

Carousel, the company and its first ride, share the same name and both are celebrating 30 years of giving little ones a thrill they won't forget. When Norwood Veatch Sr. saw the popularity of carousels at county fairs and carnivals, an idea came to him. Why not offer a miniature version and put it everywhere kids are shopping with their parents?

The idea was so revolutionary that while the kiddie ride industry was charging 10 cents per ride, Veatch was able to demand a quarter on the mobile four-seater coin-op carousel—and customers willingly paid. It didn't take long before it was a rousing success and a major hit at discount chains. That ride put down deep roots for Carousel, roots that are still sprouting today. Innovative? Yep. Creative? Sure. Today's rides share both of those qualities with the very first one.

Carousel International did not have a flashy, overnight, overhyped beginning. Instead it was a calculated strategy relying on a keen insight into what makes the kiddie ride industry tick. Veatch knew in 1968 that operators would have to generate more income than they could make with five or 10 cents per ride, but he also knew that customers were unwilling to pay more for the same old rides. Veatch found the answer to the dilemma in his multipassenger ride. Carousel's story began and continues to be steeped in innovation, expansion, adherence to a tradition of quality, and a sharp sense of the industry.

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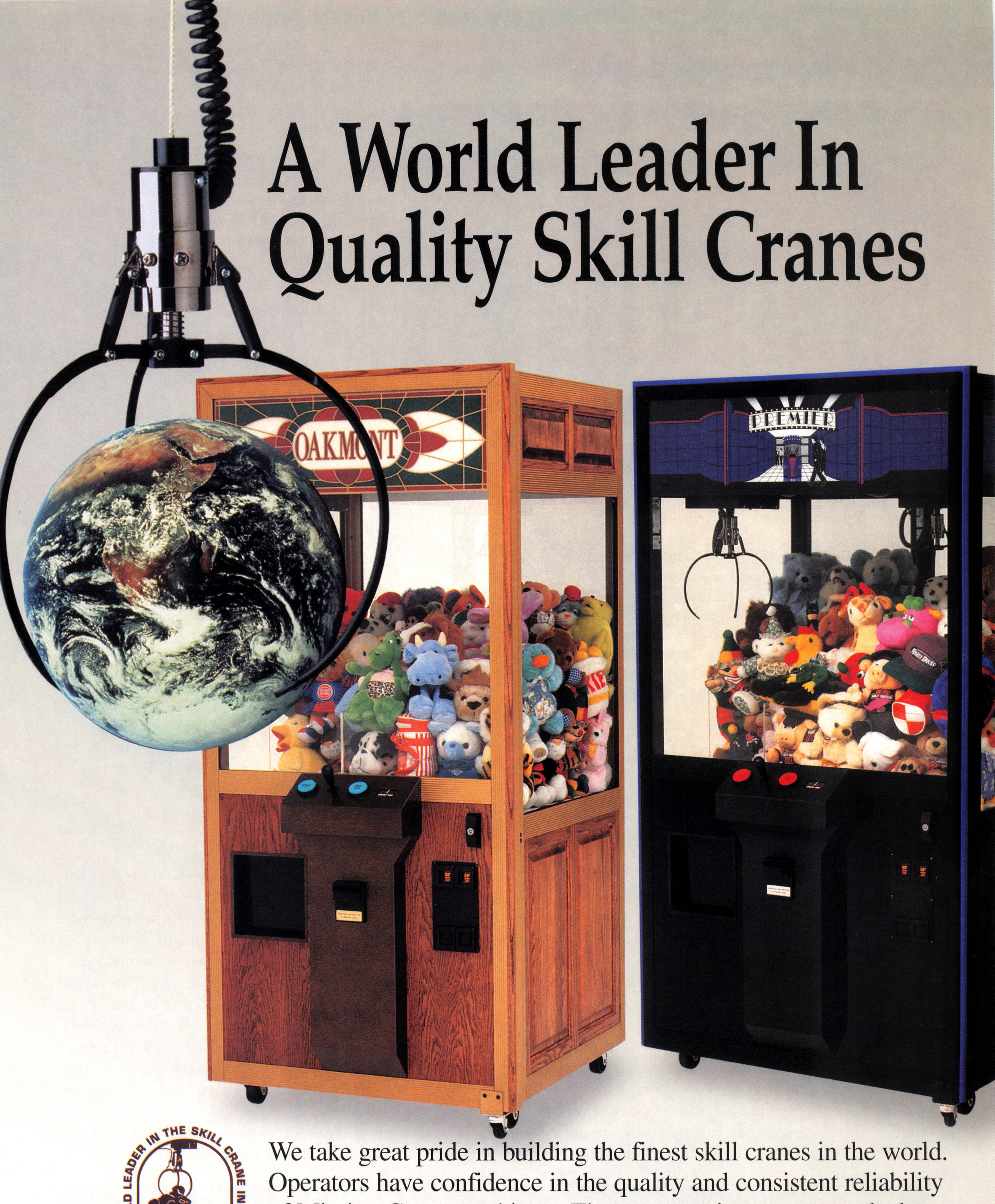

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TOP: Pictured in front of company headquarters are the third and fourth generation, Brad (r) and Steven Veatch with Brad's sons Luke and Logan.

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BOTTOM: Three generations of Veatches: Norwood Sr. and wife Frances with their son Norwood Jr. and two grandsons Brad and Steven (l) in a rare quiet moment in their booth at AMOA '85 showing their new licensed ride, the *Knight Rider* car.

Following the feat of introducing a ride that warranted quarter play, Carousel introduced such staples as the *Thunder Horse* and *Kentucky Derby* rides. The company is especially proud of its licensed rides. As early as 1985 Carousel manufactured what it said was the first licensed kiddie ride, the *Knight Rider* car. Last month Carousel unveiled its latest licensed ride, *Smokey Bear Jeep*. The two-seater ride brings an important fire prevention message to kids via an audio sound chip. "It's a timely message and one that Carousel wants to promote," noted vice president Steven Veatch, grandson of the founder.

This is a vivid example of Carousel's continuing knowledge of the industry and reacting to its unique needs. "There is no doubt that kids want rides that emphasize fun. They want action and excitement. But we know that parents are more willing to indulge their little ones when there is an element of learning involved. That's why we have worked so hard to bring both the element of fun and a timely message to the Smokey Bear ride," Steven added.

If you happened to pass Carousel's booth at the recent AMOA in Atlanta, you couldn't help but sense the appeal of the new *Mario Kart 64*. Kids are enamored of the famous Nintendo character and the ride is an exact replica of the kart shown in the Mario Kart 64 video. Mario's speech and game music complement the ride and enchant its young riders.

President Brad Veatch sees the future of kiddie rides in general as upbeat. With a healthy resurgence, Brad ex-

> *"There is no doubt that kids want rides that emphasize fun."*

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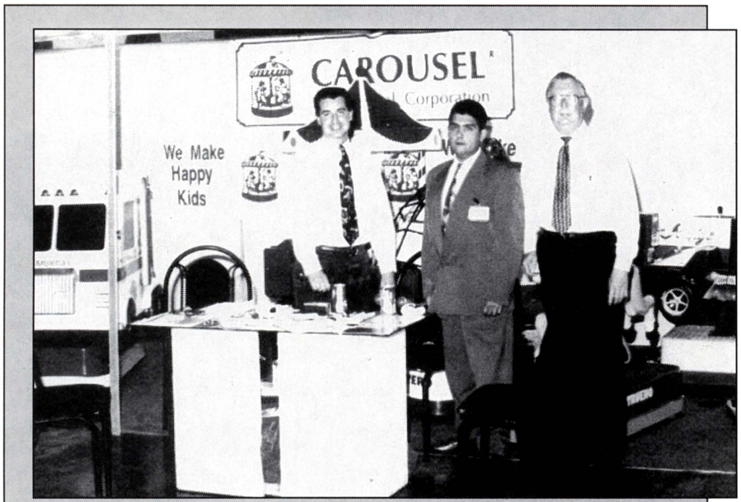
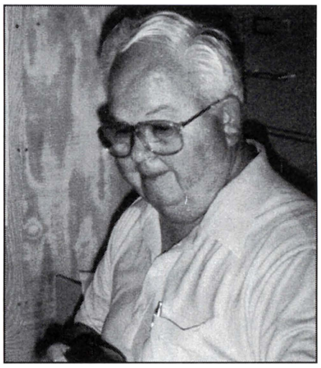


Ken Laqua dedicated his life to building a better Carousel International. He was a soft-spoken, humble man, never taking or wanting credit for anything. But he came up with some of the ideas that turned our industry around. Ken invented the kiddie ride entertainment center, grouping three kiddie rides on a platform. The entertainment center was unique because the store had three kid pleasing rides at this mini amusement park attraction.

Today you can find these entertainment centers at discount department stores, shopping centers, and factory outlet malls all over the country. Ken was a great source of encourgement to all the people who worked at Carousel, especially Brad and Steven Veatch. Ken passed away on July 14, 1995.

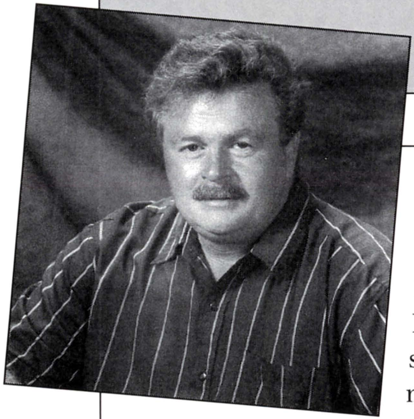
His vision of making Carousel International a 21st century children's entertainment company is being kept alive throught the Kenwood Laqua Memorial Award which is given each year to the Carousel Employee of the Year. From left: Steven Veatch, a customer, and Ken Laqua.



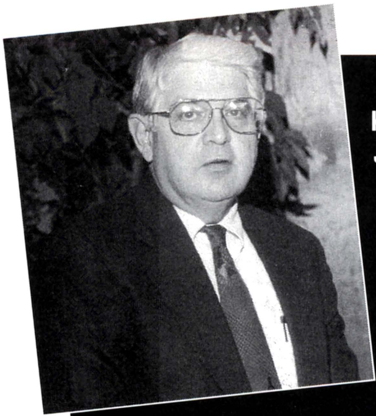
TOP LEFT: Before Carousel had a service department Norwood Veatch Sr. and his brother Delbert handled all the phone calls. Together they created the first national kiddie ride service network. Today Carousel operates thousands of kiddie rides coast to coast.

TOP MIDDLE: Carousel's first office manager, Velda Simmions, in 1973.

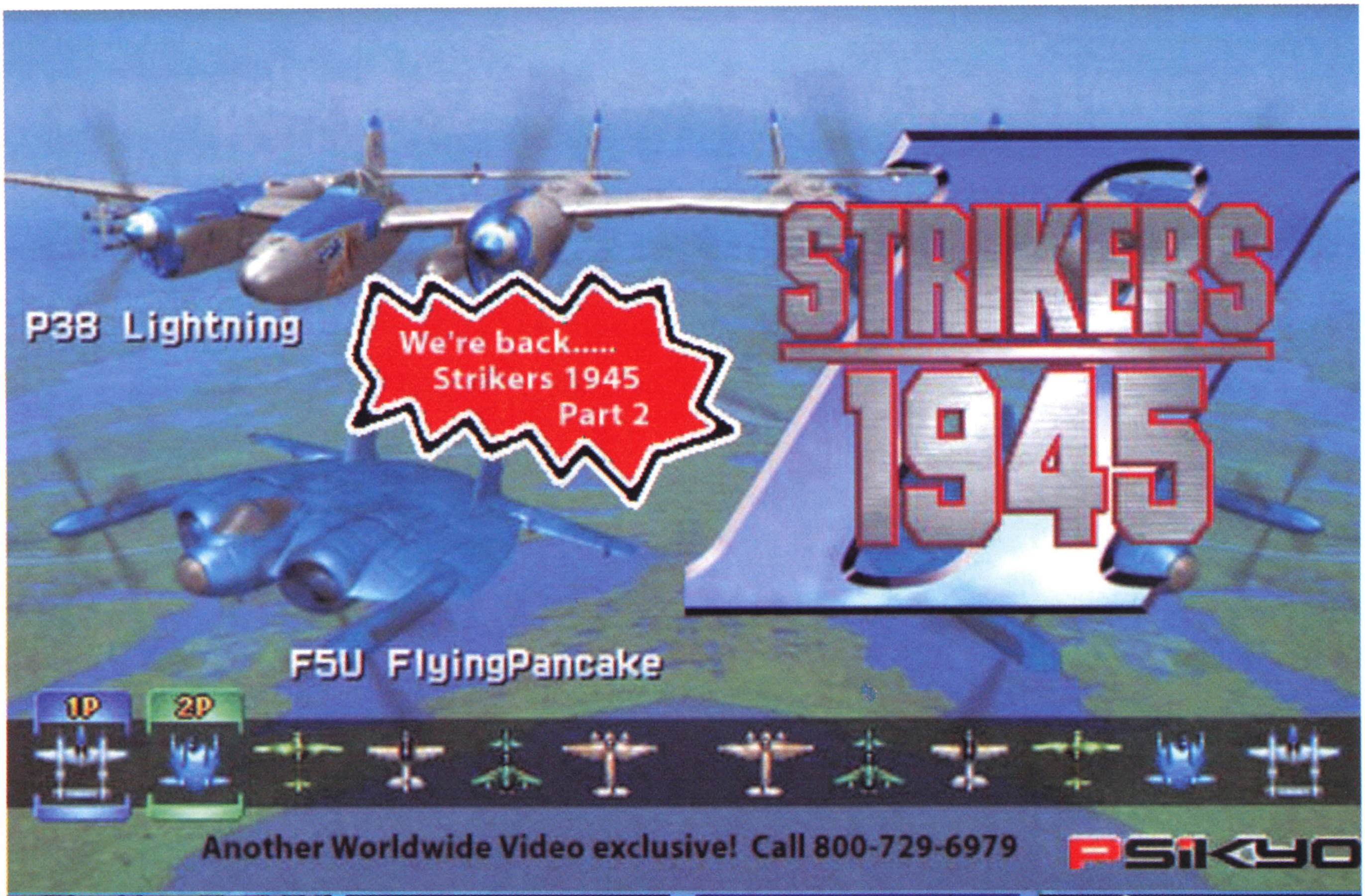
TOP RIGHT: "Bode" Howard Bode, credit manager from 1980-1989.



Dave Watt worked for Carousel more than 20 years when he retired in July 1997. Dave is said to have serviced and collected more kiddie rides than anyone in the world! He traveled millions of miles for Carousel and made it his duty to keep in close contact with store level management at all Carousel's accounts. Steven Veatch claims that Dave knows more about kidde rides than anyone who has ever worked in our industry. He was "Carousel" to the people who met him across the country. The Carousel family will miss him, but wish him the best in the future.



Ken Schaeffer retired in January 1997. He was the general manager for Carousel for almost 10 years. The Carousel family greatly appreciated his loyalty and dedication. He knew no boundaries when it came to building Carousel International. Carousel experienced great growth under his direction. The entire organization wishes him and his family the best in the future.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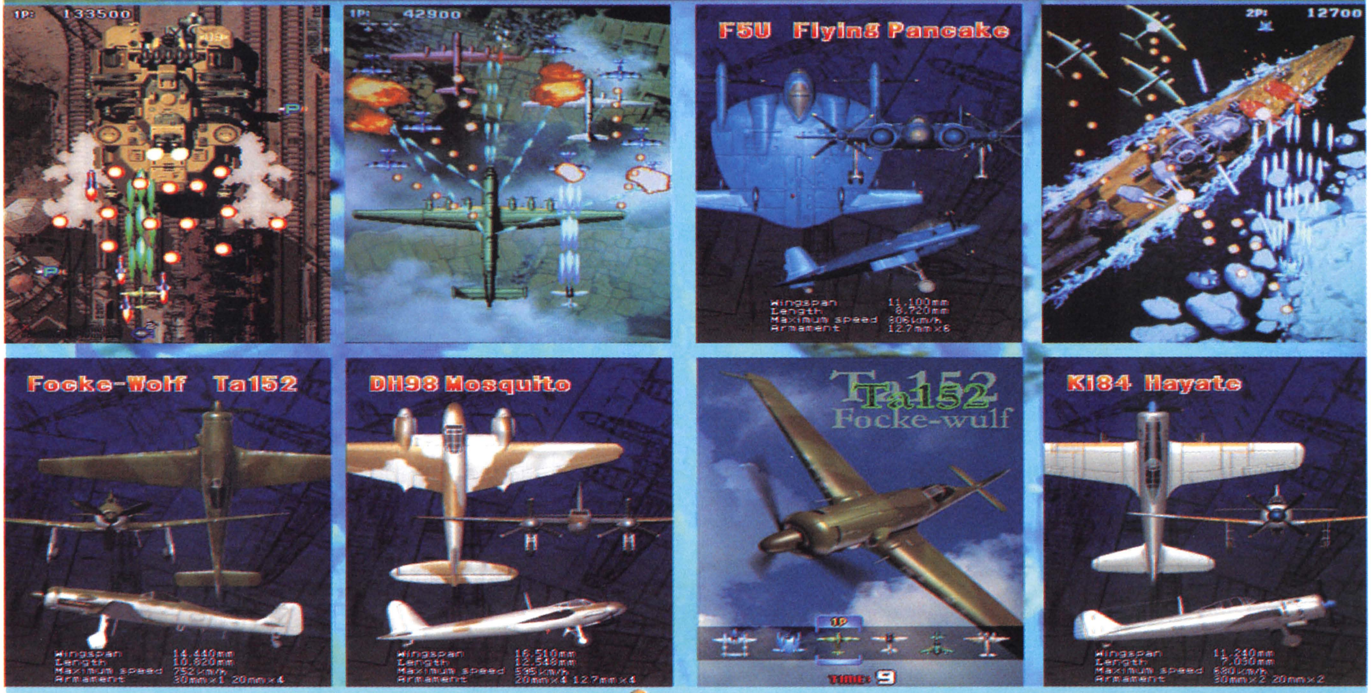
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A surprise party was held at the Hyatt in New Orleans celebrating Norwood's 50th anniversary in the coin-op industry. Here he is with his wife Frances and son Norwood Jr.

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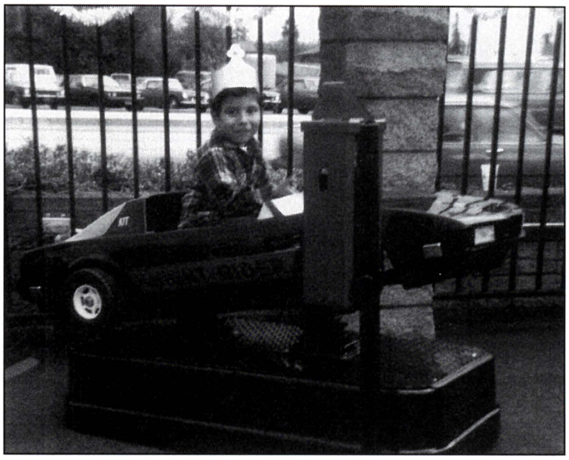

In 1985 the *Knight Rider* car was Carousel's first licensed kiddie ride.

plains, Carousel's new "value ride" option—a bill acceptor—is just what the market needs. "This will play a large role in the future of our industry," he began. "Kiddie rides are no longer just one quarter. Parents, grandparents, and kids must have at least two quarters in their pockets for a ride. Finding change is never easy, usually requiring a wait in line somewhere like a service desk. Our value ride is the best way to deliver the most value and convenience to our customers. It works this way: the dollar gives kids the added value of one extra minute of ride time. By using a dollar bill instead of quarters, customers are really saving 50 cents. Since most people let their children ride just once per visit, the operator is actually seeing higher revenues. This approach solves the problem of losing a sale when parents don't have two quarters handy."

Carousel's line of kiddie rides consistently ranks at the top of service, durability, and operational features, according to the National Kiddie Ride Association's yearly equipment poll. This time Carousel was named in the top three for service and support, best classic ride, best outdoor ride, and highest earning ride.

The company credits Mike Manselle's strict standards as one of the reasons the quality is consistently high. The factory boasts six assembly lines that make various products or components. Different lines turn out Carousel's traditional rides, contemporary rides, and video rides, while three lines produce only *Mario Karts* and *Smokey Bear Jeeps*. According to Manselle, "No rides leave this factory until they have been tested numerous times. The coin mechs, motors, gearboxes, and electronics are tested multiple times on the line, when all the component parts are in place on the ride, and the final inspection takes place before it's crated for shipping."

It's this determination to offer only the best that was the foundation laid down in 1968. Since Carousel was founded on innovation, it's only fitting that the spirit of innovation continues as the company heads for the 21st century and beyond. ▲

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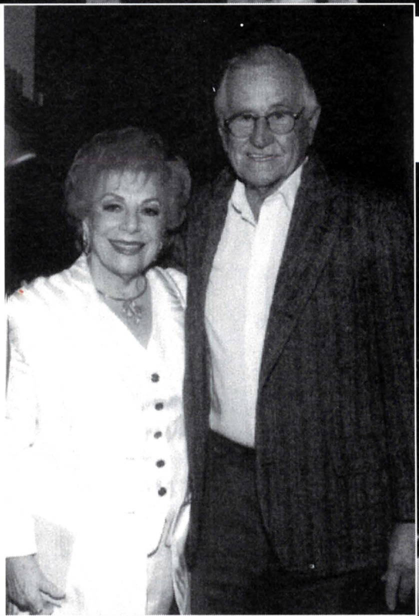
A SPECIAL DAY IN HONOR OF LEAH

C. A. Robinson's Bettelman family held a celebration in late January in honor of its most respected member Leah, and they invited friends of the family and business partners from across the country to join them for the occassion. The event, which took place at the Peterson Automotive Museum in Los Angeles, was coordinated by Leah's son Ira, daughter Sylvia and her husband Merle Sanders, and son Sandy and his wife Adrea Bettelman. Play Meter *publisher Carol Lally and her daughter Leslie attended the event along with a number of friends from the coin-op industry.*

From left: Merle and Sylvia Sanders, Leah, Sandy, Adrea, and Ira Bettelman.

An industry round table, (l-r): Mary Fujihara of Atari, Darren Decatoire of Konami, Jeanne Petit of Fabtek, Damon Paramore of Dynamo, Lenore Sayers of Midway, Steve Ward of Fabtek, David Swafford of Namco-America, Mark Singer of Central Distributing, Elaine Shirley of Atari, and Adrea Bettelman.



Leah with longtime C. A. Robinson vice president Hank Tronick.

Sega GameWorks Barbara Joyiens shares a moment with Leah.

Leah visits with Steve Ward and Jeanne Petit of Fabtek.

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INDUSTRY ALERT:

The Coin-Operated Amusement Industry has made a commitment to the U.S. Congress that the below "Guide To Coin-Operated Video Games" -- depicting approved Parental Advisory Disclosure Messages -- will be posted in clear view at all locations where video games are found and which are frequented by children. These posters are being made available -- free of charge -- by AAMA, AMOA and IAFEC, and may be ordered by contacting your appropriate association.

GUIDE TO COIN-OPERATED VIDEO GAMES

The following Parental Advisory Disclosure Messages have been established for coin-operated video games to provide consumers with a description of game content.

SUITABLE FOR ALL AGES	**The content of this game is appropriate for game players of all ages.**
ANIMATED VIOLENCE MILD	**Contains scenes of violence involving cartoon-like characters in fantasy settings.**
ANIMATED VIOLENCE STRONG	**Contains scenes of violence involving cartoon-like characters in fantasy or life-like settings such as martial arts or sports activities.**
LIFE LIKE VIOLENCE MILD	**Contains scenes involving human-like characters engaged in combative activity.**
LIFE LIKE VIOLENCE STRONG	**Contains selected scenes involving human-like characters engaged in combative activity which may result in pain, injury and/or death to the depicted character.**
SEXUAL CONTENT MILD	**Contains sexually suggestive references or material.**
SEXUAL CONTENT STRONG	**Contains graphic depictions of sexual behavior and/or the human body.**
LANGUAGE MILD	**Contains commonly used four-letter words.**
LANGUAGE STRONG	**Contains strong four-letter expletives.**

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ASI 98

Hit the Jackpot in Las Vegas

JACKPOT
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35
16
33
21
6
18

HEADING TO LAS VEGAS FOR THE BIG SPRING TRADE SHOW? THE POPULAR CONVENTION CITY AND VACATION DESTINATION CONTINUES TO SURPRISE AND DAZZLE.

It's no wonder the American Amusement Manufacturers Association has decided to settle its spring Amusement Showcase International in that man-made diamond in the desert, Las Vegas, Nev., which attracts 30 million visitors annually.

Even frequent travelers to Las Vegas find something new on every visit, as construction continues on the latest properties—Belaggio where the Dunes once stood, Venetian on the former site of the Sands, and Paradise in place of the Hacienda.

While the high-profile Strip (Las Vegas Blvd.) garnered the lion's share of media attention, especially when the New York-New York Hotel & Casino opened in January 1997, downtown underwent a facelift that turned Fremont Street into a closed pedestrian mall known as The Fremont Street Experience. The area, affectionately called "Glitter Gulch," is where Las Vegas began. The redevelopment of downtown created a new environment for the area's 11 hotel/casinos and shops. A huge space frame/canopy dominates the mall and provides the backdrop for free nightly light shows every hour after dark.

World-class entertainment can be found at the main showrooms of major hotels, and at many lounges for the cost of a mere drink. Reasonable room rates and all-you-can-eat buffets are still available, although the mega resort hotels on The Strip will cost more on the housing and food side for the pizzazz of the surroundings and the convenience of being on the city's famous thoroughfare.

Much has changed in Las Vegas over the last five years. The city continued to reinvent itself out of necessity as some

Sam Boyd's
FREMONT
4 QUEENS

Above right: The Fremont Street Experience features a nightly laser light show.

Below left: Excalibur, the hotel and casino that looks like King Arthur's castle, has one of the few remaining dinner shows.

TREASURE ISLAND
TREASURE ISLAND

Below right: One of the most in demand shows is Cirque de Soleil Mystere at Treasure Island.

form of legalized gambling found its way into most states except Hawaii and Utah. Besides being viewed as a gambling mecca, the city has dedicated itself to putting on a good show for its guests during a decade filled with new and extravagant hotels and entertainment experiences.

Once you have selected the slate of seminars you wish to attend, viewed the new games and support services that apply to your particular business needs, networked with fellow operators, and participated in the Technical Olympics, you may want to sample some of the spectacular shows.

Evening entertainment

Following is a partial list by type of show available during ASI days:

Headliners: The Moody Blues, Caesars Palace; Tony Danza, Desert Inn; Anne Murray, Bally's; Lou Rawls, The Orleans; and Danny Gans (he does it all), Rio Suites.

Comedy: The Improv, Harrah's; Boardwalk Comedy Club, Holiday Inn Boardwalk; Catch a Rising Star, MGM Grand; Comedy Club, Riviera; Comedy Fun House, Four Queens; Comedy Loft, Casino Royale; Comedy Max, Maxim; Comedy Stop, Tropicana; and hypnotist Marshall Sylver, Stratosphere.

Magic: Lance Burton, Monte Carlo; Magical Empire, Caesars Palace; Showgirls of Magic, San Remo; Spellbound, Harrah's; Rich Thomas, Tropicana; and Seigfried & Roy, Mirage.

Variety: Cirque du Soleil's Mystere, Treasure Island; EFX with David Cassidy, MGM Grand; Country Fever, Golden Nugget; King Arthur's Tournament, Excalibur; Enter the Night, Stardust; Heroes of Rock 'n Roll, Holiday Inn Boardwalk; Imagine: A Theatrical Odyssey, Luxor; Jubilee, Bally's; Radio City Spectacular, Flamingo Hilton; Splash, Riviera; Debbie Reynolds Show, Debbie Reynolds Hollywood Hotel; Folies Bergere, Tropicana; and MADhattan, New York-New York.

Most shows have two performances per night, around 7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m. Only two of the shows include dinner: King Arthur's tournament at Excalibur and Radio City Spectacular at Flamingo Hilton.

Buffet anyone?

A buffet by any other name is still a great deal! Most properties have all-day buffets, for example: Bally's— Big Kitchen Buffet, Excalibur—Round Table Buffet, Flamingo Hilton—Paradise Garden Buffet, Harrah's—Fresh Market Buffet, Imperial Palace—Emperor's Buffet, Luxor—Pharaoh's Pheast, MGM Grand—Oz Buffet, Rio Suites—Carnival World Buffet, Riviera—World's Fare Buffet, Stardust—Warehouse Buffet, and Tropicana—Island Buffet.

Shopping nearby

Major hotels have their own shops on the premises. The Forum Shops at Caesar's Palace are impressive and pricey. For a wider range of prices try The Fashion Mall in between Treasure Island and the Frontier. Not too far afield, over on Maryland Parkway by Desert Inn Road, is The Boulevard Mall.

To check out the latest show information, call (702)226-5554 for a recorded message; dial (888)226-9011 for faxed details on headliners, revues, and lounge acts; or search the Internet (http://www.lasvegas24hours.com) for more on restaurants and area attractions.

The photos used in this article are courtesy of the Las Vegas News Bureau and the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority. ▲

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ASI 98

Flashback

LAS VEGAS: the perfect convention venue

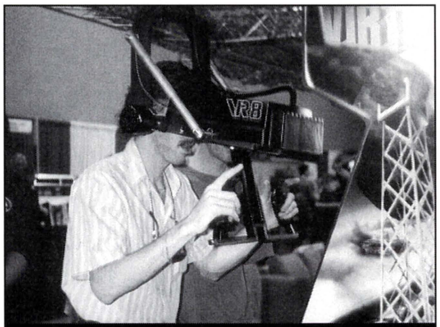
Far from the early '80s when Las Vegas was considered the worst place for an industry convention, it has now become THE place to lure tradesters to view new products. All three shows, AMOA, ACME (ASI), and Fun Expo, have held shows in the glitter-filled city. AMOA was there in 1989 and 1991; ACME in 1991, 1993, 1997, and 1998; Fun Expo in 1994, 1996, and 1997. Here are some memories of those shows held in the city that never sleeps.

Play Meter celebrated its 15th anniversary in Las Vegas complete with tuxedos and a giant champagne bottle.

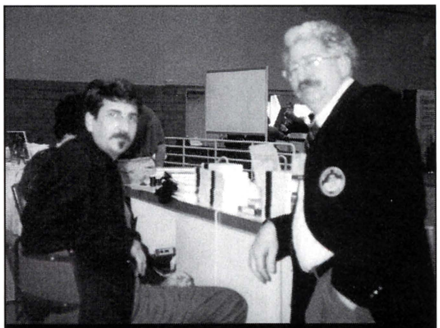
Where but Las Vegas could you have a photo with characters like these and it doesn't seem strange?

Elvira, mistress of the dark, posed with a Williams pinball named after her in 1989.

Yes, you do see quite a few characters in Las Vegas. Just who is that weird guy the general is holding?



In 1993 virtual reality was the talk of the show in Las Vegas.



Play Meter's technical editor Randy Fromm (l) manned the booth. Williams' Tom Cahill, a fellow technical expert, stopped to chat.

Dennis Sable and Judy Novak heated up the dance floor during one of the Las Vegas banquets.

The Las Vegas show always brings out the "celebrities." *Play Meter's* Carol Lally (second from left) chats with a few of them on the show floor.

The ever-popular *Bank-It* from Lazer-Tron was introduced in Las Vegas by (l-r): Ron Carrara, Norm Petermeier, and Bryan Kelley.

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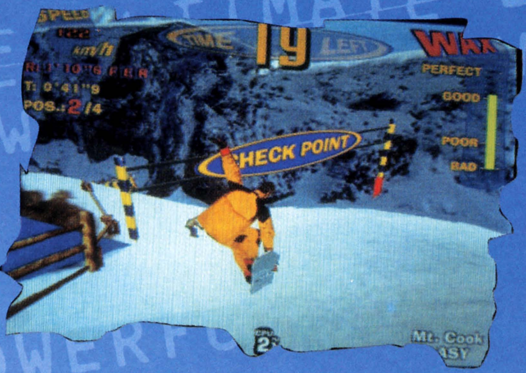
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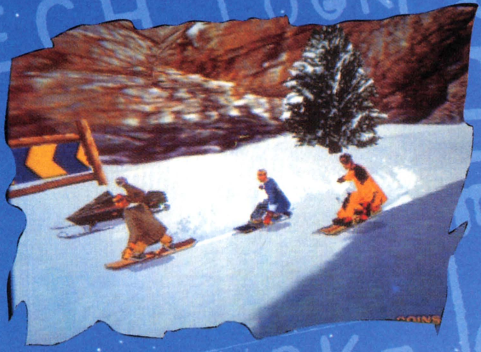

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ASI 98

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Educational Sessions

THURSDAY, MARCH 26

9 a.m.-11 a.m.—"Service with a Twist, Part II: Managing Fun" with Ben Jones and Peggy Carnahan of Provest/RECreation Inc.

11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.—1) "The Great Amusement Giveaway & Radio Program" moderated by Bob Fay of AAMA. Panelists include Jim Stansfield of Jim Stansfield Vending and Steve Lieberman of Lieberman Music Co.; 2) "Bowling for Dollars" (how to sell to such locations) moderated by Scott Frager of *Bowling International* magazine.

1:30 p.m.-3 p.m.—"Maximizing Returns on Your Coin-Op Game Portfolio" with Frank Seninsky of Alpha-Omega.

3 p.m.-5 p.m.—"Concession Go-Karting 101" with Steve Hix, director of the International Recreational Go-Kart Association (IRGA).

3:30 p.m.- 5 p.m.—"Touch Screen Countertop Games" moderated by Lou Rudolph of Merit Industries.

FRIDAY, MARCH 27

9 a.m.-11 a.m.—"Open Arcade Architecture: What PC-Based Coin-Op Means to You" with a panel moderated by Intel.

11 a.m.-1 p.m.—"Miniature Golf 101" moderated by Steve Hix of IRGA, also director of the Miniature Golf Association of the United States (MGAUS).

1:30 p.m-3 p.m.—1) "Redemption for Rookies" with Michael Getlan of Amusement Consultants, Steve Chernin of Play-By-Play, and Cliff Brechner of Dan Brechner and Co.; 2) "Digital Imaging Entertainment" moderated by Nick Montano of *Vending Times.*

3:30 p.m.-5 p.m.—1) "Today's Jukebox: Keeping Your Music Competitive" moderated by Jeremy Tepper of *Street Beat*; 2) "Kiddie Rides" moderated by Tom Theisen of Theisen Vending. ▲

Show Hours for General Trade

Thursday, March 26—10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Friday, March 27——10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Saturday, March 28—10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Special Activities

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25

1 p.m.—AAMCF First Annual Charity Golf Tournament set for the Painted Desert Golf Club.

9 a.m.-5 p.m.—Redemption Field Trip. Measure the Las Vegas fun quotient at area entertainment centers. Buses leave from Bally's Hotel.

THURSDAY, MARCH 26

10:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.—Technical Olympics Seminars

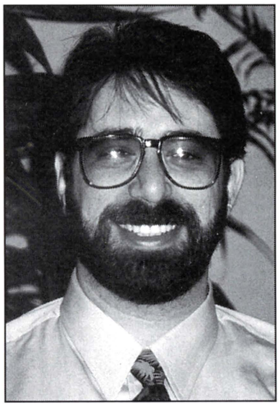
FRIDAY, MARCH 27

10:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.—Technical Olympics Seminars

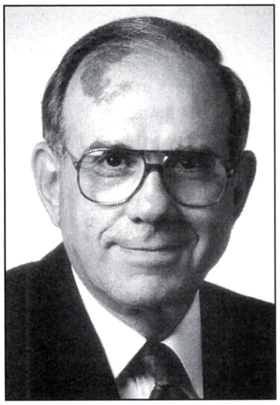
7 p.m.-9 p.m.—Operators' Cocktail Party and AAMCF Silent Auction, *Play Meter* and AAMA award presentations, Bally's Hotel

SATURDAY, MARCH 28

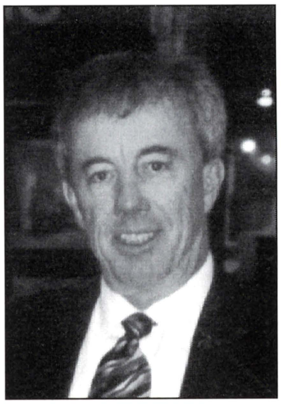
10:30 a.m.-3 p.m.—Technical Olympics Seminars



Michael Getlan headlines the panel for "Redemption for Rookies."



Steve Lieberman joins the panel for "The Great Amusement Giveaway & Radio Program."



Tom Theisen moderates the session, "Kiddie Rides."

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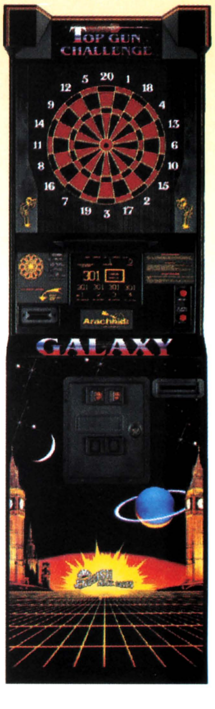
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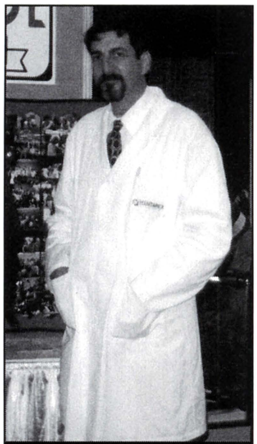
Don't miss the Technical Olympics

(Presented by Randy Fromm's Arcade School)



Randy Fromm steps to the head of the class for numerous Technical Olympics seminars. Other notable guest speakers are on the agenda.

Amusement machine technicians jump from problem to problem without a second thought. In fact, as game techs we go looking for trouble! That's our job. Just about every repair presents new challenges, new hurdles to overcome.

Now's your chance to pick up a wealth of technical information and have some fun too. The Technical Olympics is a wacky addition to those all-important technical lectures. Of course, we'll have technical seminars on the latest monitors, bill changers, jukeboxes, ticket dispensers, PC-based games, photo sticker machines, redemption equipment, and pinball machines. But there's more, much more fun and prizes!

How fast can you construct a working electronic circuit from a schematic diagram and a heap of spare parts? What if you had to do it using gigantic electronic components in a race for time against your fellow technicians from all over the world? What if the prize was a brand-new, 25-inch monitor or a Fluke Model 11 Digital Multimeter?

Well, you get the idea of the Technical Olympics. Those who choose to participate will have a chance to win the grand prize or one of dozens of other prizes during the three-day contest. Here's your opportunity to prove just how good a technician you really are. It won't take long to participate so plan to enter the contest.

Ever have the opportunity to play with a $8,000 suite of test equipment? Here's your chance to hurdle over problems with Sencore's SC3100 fully automatic oscilloscope and other devices. You can also pick up plans to build your very own curve tracer (a device that turns your oscilloscope into a component tester) using junkbox parts.

Ready for the power lift? Well, bring in your bad picture tubes for free testing and possible repair using the world's newest and most effective CRT tester/rejuvinator/restorer, Sencore's CR7000. Learn how to test flyback transformers and deflection yokes using an induction analyzer.

Stop by Technical Olympics headquarters to join the fun and games.

TECHNICAL OLYMPICS SEMINAR PROGRAM

Industry veteran Keith White will be there to help you understand and repair the NSM jukebox system. Dash through jukebox and bill acceptor repair with a top-notch game plan from the head coach at Rowe as well.

Do you like to play ball? Pinball, of course! Sega and Williams will be on hand to run through their respective systems. They're big on freebies like manuals, tools, schematic diagrams and, if we're lucky, T-shirts as well. You won't want to miss these presentations.

Naturally, every olympic event has its monitors. The Technical Olympics is no different. Technical instructor Randy Fromm will be on hand throughout the duration of the show to answer your technical questions about monitors as well as give a special presentation on repairing photo sticker machines and PC-based games.

While you won't exactly work up a sweat at the Technical Olympics, you will want to wipe down when you're done.

Wipe down your connectors, that is! Everyone attending will receive a sample of CAIG Laboratories ProGold treatment that stops connector problems once and for all.

Everyone wins at the Technical Olympics with live presentations, technical information, and free samples galore! Skilled (or lucky) technicians will come away with some pretty neat prizes including 25-inch monitors from Sharp Image, Wells-Gardner, and Eygo. Parts supplier PartStar is contributing a Fluke Digital Multimeter and CAIG Laboratories has provided 12 full-sized applicators full of ProGold connector treatment.

Admission is free with your badge for the show.

SCHEDULE:

Thursday, March 26

10:30 a.m.-Noon—"Using Sophisticated (and some not-so-sophisticated) Test Equipment," Randy Fromm

12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m. "Troubleshooting Sega Pinball," Joe Blackwell, Sega Pinball Service

2 p.m.-3 p.m.—"A Look at NSM jukeboxes and Troubleshooting," Keith White, NSM Service

3:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.—"Servicing Rowe Bill Changers," Rowe Service

Friday, March 27

10:30 a.m.-Noon—"Servicing Photo Sticker Machines," Randy Fromm

12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.—"Troubleshooting Williams Pinball," Tom Cahill, Williams' director of customer service

2 p.m.-3 p.m. "Ticket Machine Servicing," Lars Jorgensen, Deltronic Labs

3:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m. "Troubleshooting Redemption Equipment," JimDupree, Smart Industries

Saturday, March 28

10:30 a.m.-Noon—"Troubleshooting PC-based Games," Randy Fromm (Learn to repair your own PC; it's easy.)

12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.—"Servicing Rowe Jukeboxes," Rowe Service

2 p.m.-3 p.m. Open Technician's Forum, Q&A, moderated by Randy Fromm ▲

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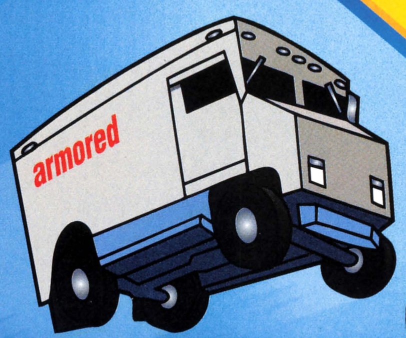

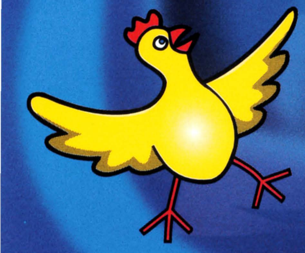

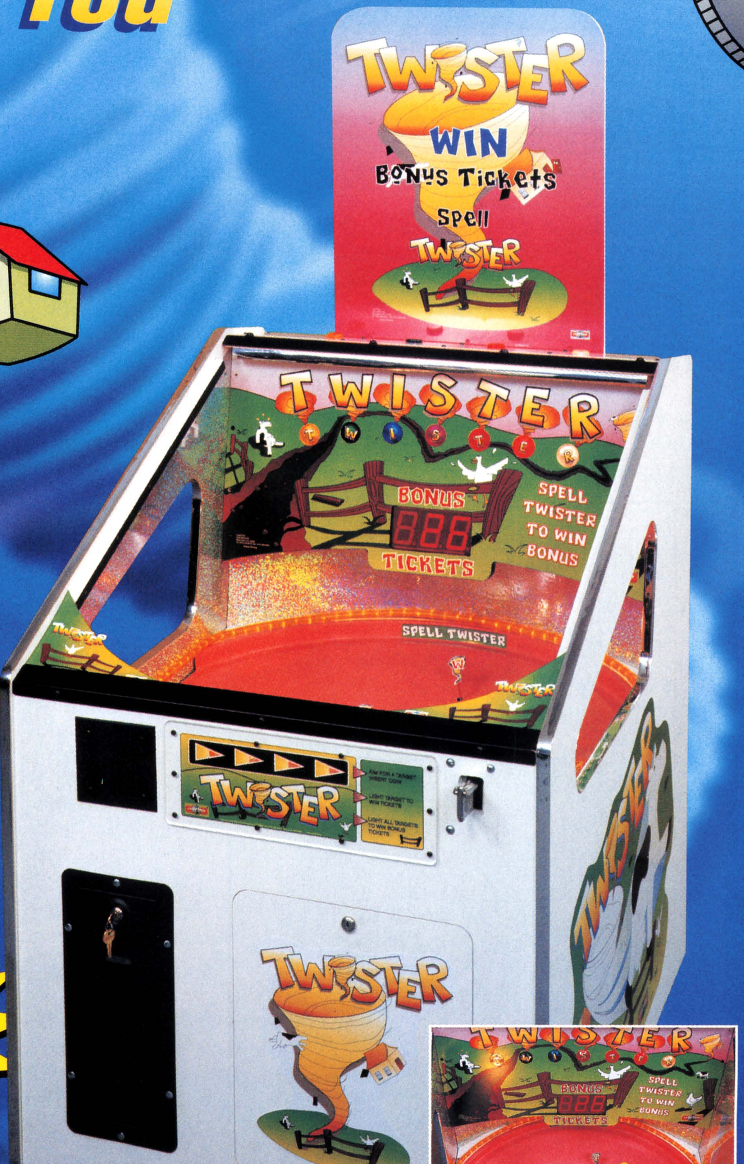
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ASI 98

Here is a partial list of some new products and old favorites you can expect to see at the upcoming ASI '98 in Las Vegas. While we've given you a good idea of how much you'll be able to see, remember that there will be lots more that didn't make it here.

Product Preview

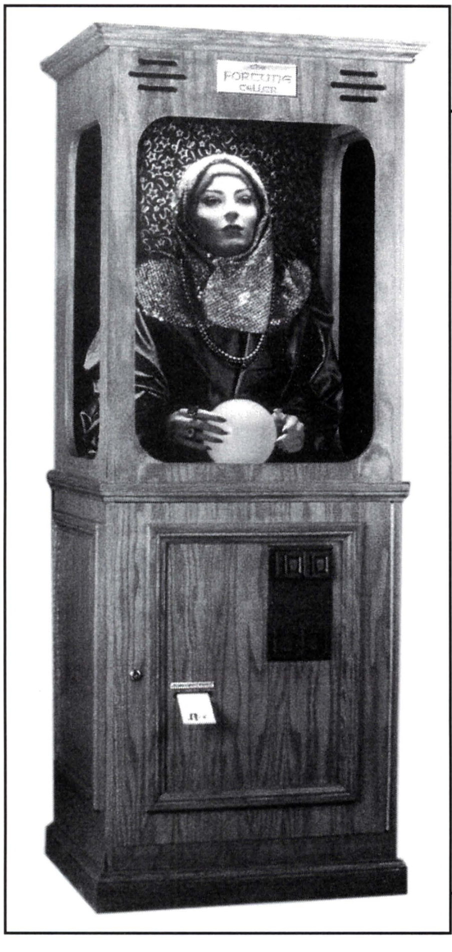
A&A Plush (246)
(310)631-0700

The company was hard-pressed to name any particular new hot item, but did say they have lots of new plush items this year. Many of them will be featured in their booth.

Action Lighting (121)
(406)586-5105

On display will be decorative lighting products, especially rope lighting, fiber optics, and replacement bulbs.

Bay Tek's *Fortune Teller*



Advanced Games & Engineering (529)
(954)527-0907

Look for the 1998 version of the popular candy crane, *Winner Every Time*; the latest *Toy Zone*, a 40" plush crane with a real chute giving full front toy exposure; *Beanie Zone*, for those wildly popular beanie babies; the *Lobster Zone*, great for restaurants; and the *Calling Card Depot,* a pre-paid calling card vending machine.

Advanced Graphic Designs (1618)
(702)786-3300

Screen printing on various materials like glass, plastic, and decal material. Specializing in game headers, logos, backlights, control panel overlays,and custom designs.

968
INLINE
GAME OVER
TICKETS

Benchmark's *Inline*

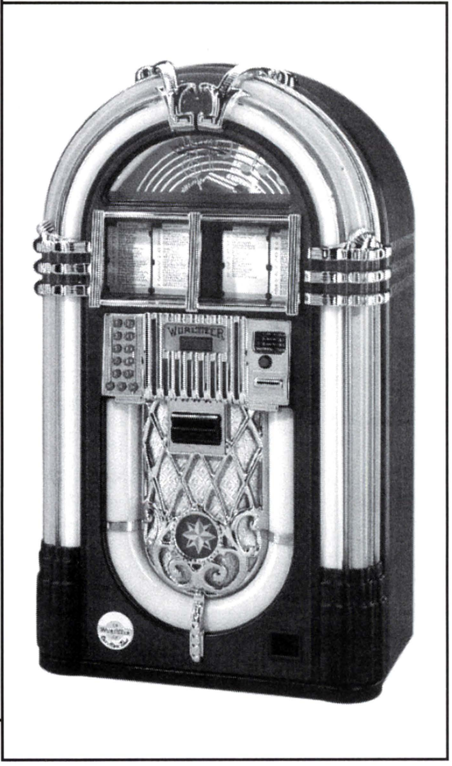
Advanced Mfg. & Development (1238)
(707)459-7560

The company will be featuring its line of universal cabinets in 29", 33", and 50" inch models with player pods and their sit-down motion bases.

American Changer (1348)
(800)741-9840

Here's a machine operators will want: a brand-new dollar bill dispenser that allows customers to insert a $20 bill and get 20 $1 bills or four $5 bills, depending on how you set it. It's the only one in the country. Also see the new token dispenser, which has a key pad so you can set it to give out as many tokens as you choose. And it's simple to

Wurlitzer's *One More Time Princess*



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or visit our website at www.coincnx.com

change, say, if there's a birthday party where the guests need tokens. No more counting them out by hand.

Arachnid (1424)
(815)654-0212
You'll see some surprises in this booth, including a brand-new dart game the company says will knock your socks off, and a new jukebox.

Ascension Productions (1651)
(403)496-9058
The company will exhibit its Lazer Runner laser tag system and themed arenas.

ARDAC (541)
(440)946-3000
Featuring new security for your gaming profits—the Happ over/under upstacker validator doors with Ardac bill acceptors. Also highlighting its line of bill acceptors designed to fit into amusement games.

Atari Corp. (600)
(408)434-3700
It will be showing *California Speed*, a game developed as a street-priced driver with all the elements of a classic. Using 3Dfx's Voodoo Graphics chipset, it offers 40 minutes of unique game play with huge selection of cars and eye-catching graphics. And that may not be all!

Baton Lock (1219)
(714)265-3636
Baton will highlight a wide variety of medium and high-security products such as Camlocks, Screw locks, T-handle, Plug locks, bulk vending locks, padlocks, Pin locks, and other security devices.

Bay Tek (420)
(920)822-3951
In addition to its favorites you can see *Buzzy Buzzy Bee*, a novelty game where players catch "buzzing bees" in a net; *The Fortune Teller*, a novelty card-dispensing game, with a mannequin that speaks to the player while activating her crystal ball; and *Hoopz Gum*, an interactive bulk vendor, challenging the player to launch a gumball, jawbreaker, bouncy ball, or capsule with a pinball-type plunger into a mini basketball hoop.

Benchmark Games (212)
(954)781-8080
The company will be highlighting its latest in redemption fun: *Claim Jumper*, a skill redemption game described as a fast train ride to riches; *Slam Bingo*, a skill stop with features of classic bingo (the second game in a series using the same new innovative cabinet); *Big Haul*, with the skill of a roll down and the feel of a pusher; *Inline*, a skill stop where players pick five to 10 numbers to fill their card; and *Beat the Monster*, a kinetic bubble gum machine with lots of action and enticing sounds. Benchmark hinted that they may also have a new self-contained redemption machine.

Best Amusement (1421)
(864)220-6777
Will show some new 8-liners and a new multigame lottery terminal, *Excalibur. Excalibur* will feature video poker, Keno, reel games, and blackjack.

H. Betti/Fun Merchants (732)
(201)438-1300
The company will feature its *Mega* crane line that includes one- two- and three-player models in both large and small cabinets; *Quatro*, a four-player centerpiece crane; and *Eye Catcher*, a three-player, low-boy centerpiece crane first shown at IAAPA.

H.Betti/Imperial (832)
(201)288-9199
Will be featuring its line of billiard and foosball supplies and coin machine and vending replacement parts and accessories.

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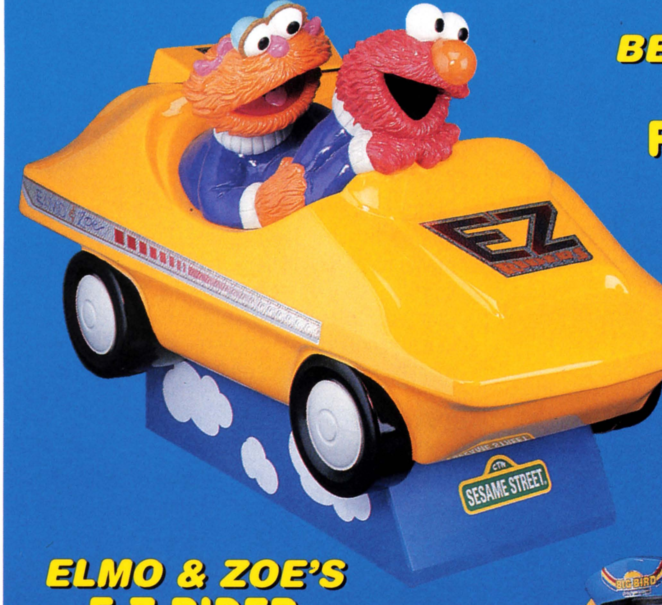

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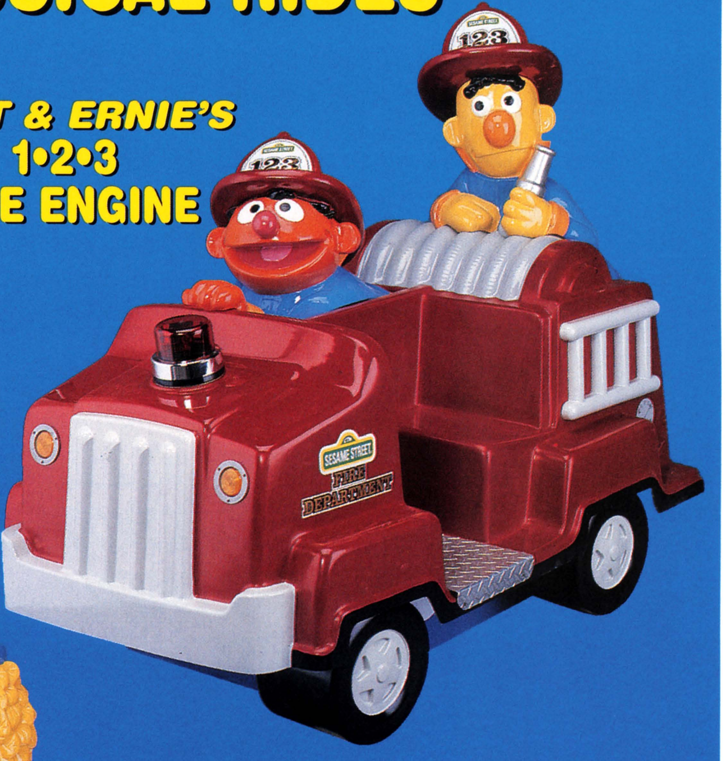

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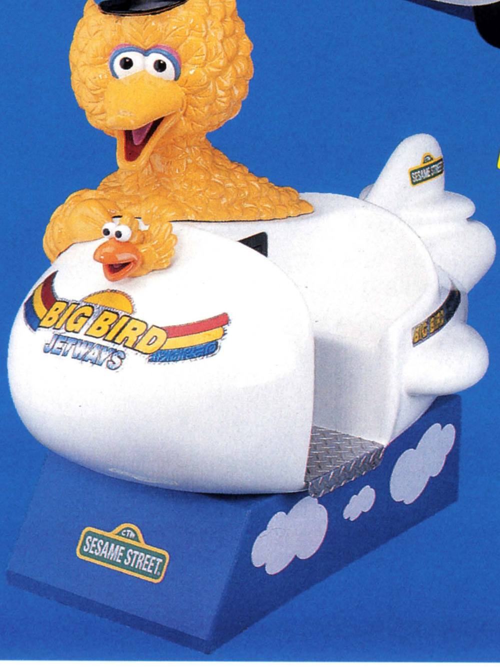

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Billiard Congress of America (113)
(319)351-2112
BCA will focus on its league and program department, which it calls the second largest league system in the United States. Items in the booth will include product and service catalogs, posters, newsletters, instructor's manuals, league manuals, and other material related to the new All-American tour.

Bob's Space Racers (1221)
(904)677-0761
Look for two new games, *Top Glo* and *Red Planet. Top Glo* is a two-unit water redemption game. The race toys sit atop a glowing tube of light and speed upward as player shoot the water guns at the target. *Red Planet*, a redemption game, challenges players to land the Pathfinder lander on Mars as a NASA technician. Both can be re-themed for a new look.

Bonita Marie (621)
(732)349-1994
This company is well-known for some unusual and appealing merchandise for both redemption counters and cranes. See what's new for the upcoming season. You'll see NASCAR items, major league baseball, and merchandise they're supplying for Sammy's *Sports Arena* game. As always you can choose from an array of unique plush from regular to jumbo sizes. But the surprise will be in items relating to some of the new upcoming movies destined to be hits just like the merchandise!

Brand Imports (108)
(602)443-3378
Will be showing its sticker vending machines along with a vast array of temporary tattoos and prismatic stickers.

Bromley (1208)
(847)509-0240
Bromley will once again draw attention with its *Shocker* machine. You sit in a realistic electric chair and experience the jolt as you squeeze the handle. Also see an array of standard Bromley favorites.

Cadillac Jack (1032)
(770)908-2094
Brand-new is the *Funny Fruit, Pirates Gold, Triple Play*, and *Cherry Line* 3D redemption machines. They all have multiredemption settings, easy on-screen menus, buttons that flash to assist play, and internal bookkeeping and audits. Also check out the video blackjack, poker, and multitouch machines.

Capcom (808)
(408)774-0500
The 21st title for the CPS II system, *Marvel vs. Capcom, Clash of the Super Heroes,* features more than 20 of the most famous super heroes of all time. There's Spider-Man, Wolverine, and Captain America to lead the marvel titans into combat, while Mega Man, Captain Commando, and Strider Hiryu lead the Capcom heroes.

Carousel International (1608)
(573)392-7125
See the latest kiddie rides *Smokey Bear Jeep,* featuring our favorite fire prevention bear with an important message for his young riders; and *Mario Kart 64,* featuring a replica of the kart in the video that kids love.

C.E.S. (1046)
(847)695-0023
The company will feature its *Galaxy Game,* a cocktail table with a multigame video system. It holds up to four cartridges and each cartridge features six games. The current line of games includes card games like blackjack and solitaire, and others like the connect-four type game called Global Domination, bowling, hockey, Tic-Tac-Toe, and also new cartridges by showtime.

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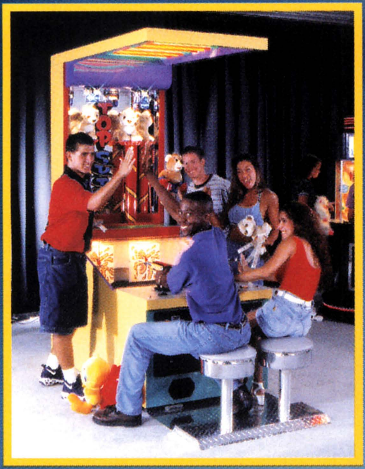

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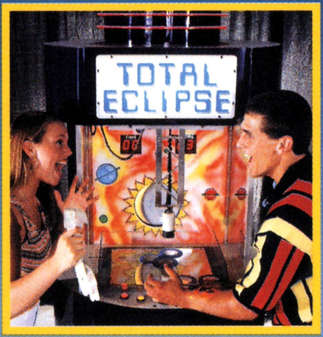

Total Eclipse™

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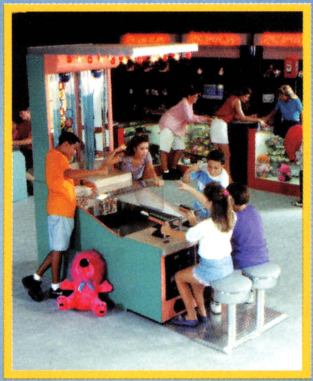

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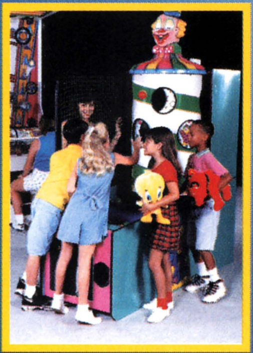

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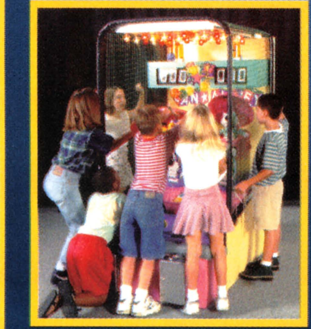
Let us turn fun into gold for you. Call today for complete information on our full line of redemption and group games.



Kiddie Can Alley™

Bob's Space Racers, Inc
427 15th Street
Daytona Beach, FL 32117
PH: 904-677-0761
FAX: 904-677-0794
Web: http://www.BobsSpaceRacers.com
E-mail: Sales@BobsSpaceRacers.com

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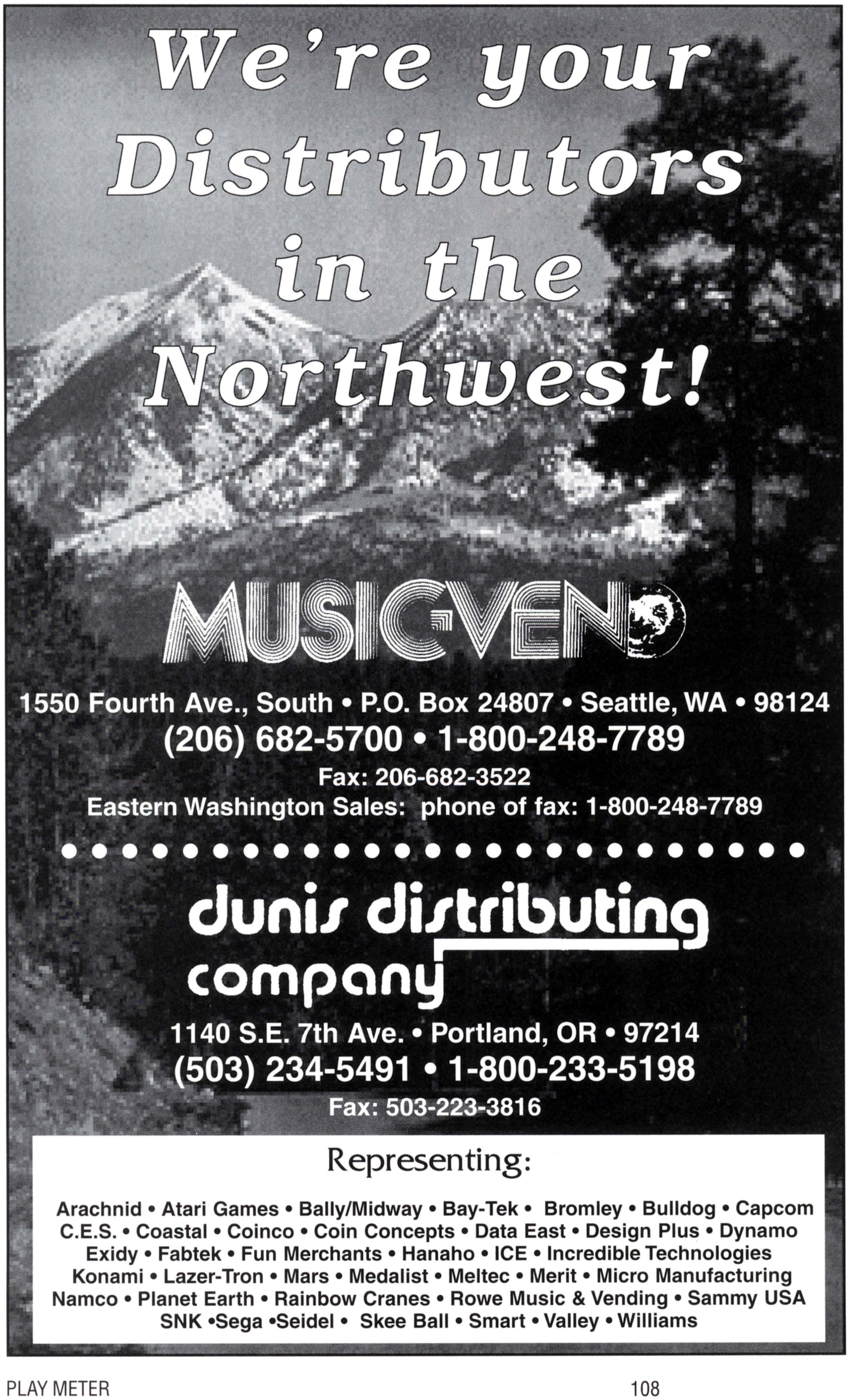
Chicago Lock (628)
(414)947-7177
Look for a wide assortment of locks for all security needs.

Coastal Amusements (724)
(732)905-6662
Brand-new is the *Super Hoop-La,* which tests your eye/hand coordination skills. Using buttons the player attempts to position a hoop over the top of one of 25 canisters. Also new is *Double Jam,* a two-player kid's basketball with bright colors. It features two baskets, one above the other and the lower one continually rotates back and forth. The company will also show the new *American Hi-Striker,* an FEC/LBE downsized version of the outdoor amusement park model manufactured by American Hi-Striker, a new subsidiary of Coastal; and *Circus Parade,* a new six-player redemption pusher.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Coin ConneXion (1825)
(605)331-5575
The company will be showing its route management and FEC management software for any size amusement, vending, and video lottery business. Also see the wand-based fed data collection system that enables collectors to quickly and accurately enter all collection related data on location.

Coin Mechanisms (935)
(800)323-6498, (630)924-7070
Scheduled for display: coin doors, faceplates, coin boxes, timers, Microcoin multimechs, mechanical mechs, and VLT Coin In. Also available: custom products.

Cue & Case Sales (1438)
(800)835-7665, (904)448-9301
Royal Crown balls will be shown along with guaranteed straight house cues. The balls are extremely durable with a super high gloss finish at a new low price; the cues are one-piece, solid-maple and color-coded to show weights (also at a reasonable price).

D & R Industries/Championship (636)
(800)424-5542, (847)677-3200
A complete line of Championship woolen and worsted billiard fabrics in all colors and styles will be featured along with the Championship pre-cut bed and rail program that's convenient and cost-effective.

Deltronic Labs (616)
(215)997-8616
Look for a full line of ticket dispensers and ticket eaters that count and destroy tickets.

Design Plus Industries (1432)
(800)995-2375, (309)697-9778
For authentic bowling for one to six players, check out the *Pro Striker* and the new *Cosmic Bowler* suitable for black light locations. Both have interactive display and sound, operator-adjustable features, and a choice of three lengths.

Diamond Game Enterprises (1441)
(818)727-1690
The exhibit will include the *Lucky Shamrock* long distance phone card dispenser and the C-Cash automated teller machine.

Dynamo Interactive (1412)
(817)284-0114
Slated for display: the Tidel ATM machine and Internet Access kiosk machine that allows Internet access from a remote location.

Dynamo Ltd. (1311)
(800)527-6054, (817)284-0114
The *Hot Flash II* air hockey table will be formally introduced, along with an updated line of cabinets (27", 34", and 39" models awaiting UL and CUL approval) with new features for operators in the '90s. In addition, the Dynamo Soccer foosball table and *Standard, Top Brass,* and *Black Light* pool tables will be exhibited.

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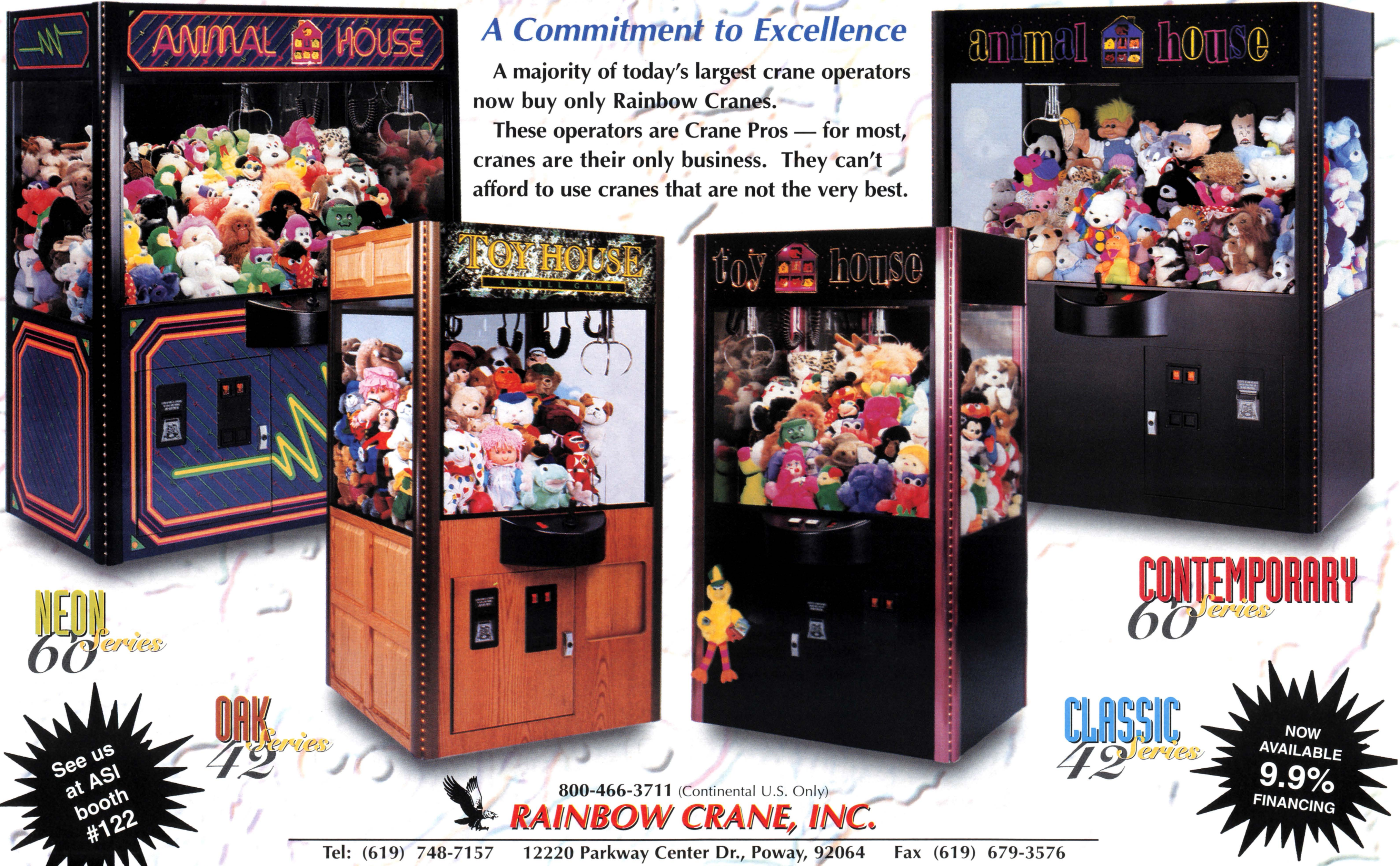
ANIMAL HOUSE
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toy house
animal house

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EMT (1408)
(630)860-5100

Look for the company's line of high-quality kiddie rides including the Muppet Babies.

ESD (1416)
(800)523-1510, (215)628-0860

Look for vertical coin slides, locks ranging from economy models to high-security models, money boxes, and the new Smart Card/Debit Card system.

Entropy USA (1718)
(800)241-0633, (908)506-0002

Ticket dispensers, power supplies, speakers, and various components will be exhibited plus the *Road Hawg* redemption game and a few surprises.

Exidy (1429)
(650)364-5201

New in the booth: *Gun Gallery,* a gun game with pop-up design in a compact cabinet similar to *Hot Shot* and *Critter; Fun Mirrors* that alters your image from short to tall and chubby to skinny; and a second ticket dispenser on *Turbo Ticket,* the merchandiser that lets players gather as many tickets as possible in a set amount of time.

Family Entertainment Software (448)
(770)922-5666

TAMS 97 will be available for review. It is a total management system that automates and integrates every aspect of an entertainment operation, from group reservations to inventory control and cash center monitoring to employee scheduling.

5 Star Redemption (208)
(818)773-6057

The new redemption game *Dinospin* will debut (players spin a bone to land in a win area and can double tickets with the "go for more" feature). Also showing: *Dinoscore, Treasure Falls, Surfin' Safari, Pirate's Revenge,* and *Flingshot.*

Fun Center Software (1434)
(914)896-5020

The company will showcase the Redemption Express software package to fully control redemption counters. Key points include inventory control and tracking, ticket redemption, and VIP clubs with built-in marketing tools. Employees can take care of an unlimited number of customers simultaneously at the redemption counter.

Fun Industries (932)
(800)747-1144, (309)755-5021

Products include the *Fun-E-Ball* interactive bulk vending machine with steering wheel control, the *Steer Crazy* redemption game, the *Pop Fly* and *Copy Cat* game/prize vendors, and the *Party Machine* and *Cash Cube* promotional units for FECs.

Great American Recreation (624)
(800)831-2011, (401)463-5587

Introductions include the *Day-Glo Power Hockey* table with new colors, graphics, and features; the *Monarch* light oak finish and *Neon Lights* pool tables; a custom upgrade that adds gold trim to any Great American pool table; and the popular lay down 27" video cabinet suitable for trackball-control games. All pool tables are available in sizes from six feet to nine feet.

Greenwald Industries (1220)
(800)221-0982, (860)526-0800

The company will exhibit coin chutes, U.S. and international coins and tokens, timing mechanisms, drop coin meters, and locks.

GreyStone Technology (1412)
(619)874-7000

Look for the PC-based futuristic flying/racing game *XS-G* that features beginner, intermediate, and advanced courses, shown in both sit-down and stand-up cabinets.

HMS Monaco (729)
(800)777-0901, (212)239-8700

Brand-new are prize kits for Sammy USA's

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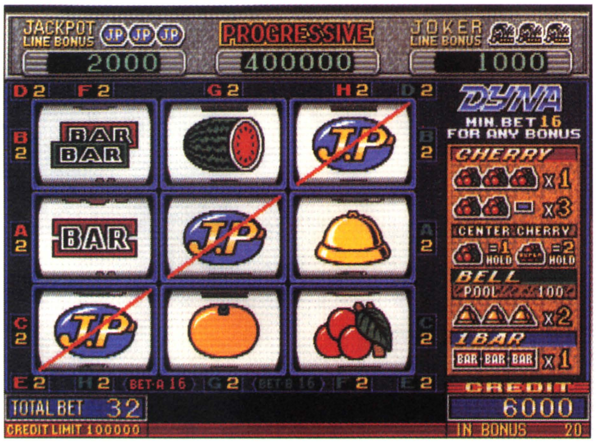
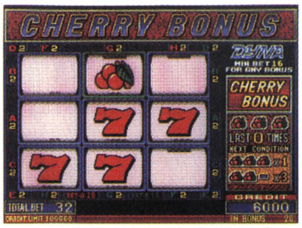
SELECTABLE THREE TYPES OF DOUBLE UP GAME.

TRIPLE JACKPOT



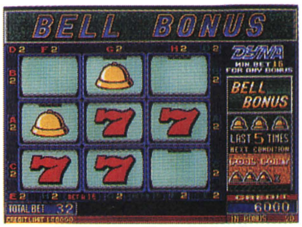
JACKPOT LINE BONUS
2000
PROGRESSIVE
400000
JOKER LINE BONUS
1000
DYNA
MIN.BET 16 FOR ANY BONUS
CHERRY
CENTER CHERRY
BELL
POOL 100
1BAR
TOTAL BET 32
CREDIT LIMIT 100000
CREDIT
6000
IN BONUS 20

TRIPLE BONUS



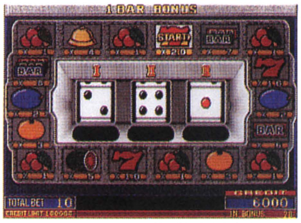
CHERRY BONUS
CHERRY BONUS
TOTAL BET 32
CREDIT
6000

CHERRY BONUS



BELL BONUS
BELL BONUS
TOTAL BET 32
CREDIT
6000

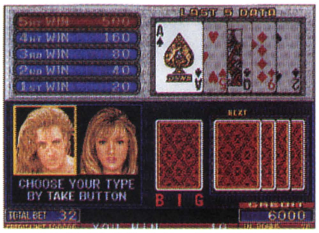
BELL BONUS



1 BAR BONUS
START
TOTAL BET 10
CREDIT
6000

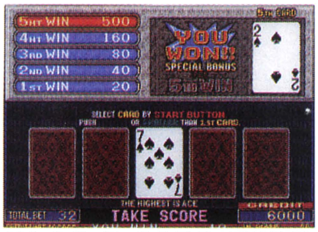
1 BAR BONUS

SELECTABLE THREE TYPES OF DOUBLE UP GAME



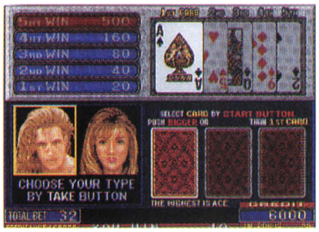
5TH WIN 500
4TH WIN 160
3RD WIN 80
2ND WIN 40
1ST WIN 20
LAST 5 DATA
CHOOSE YOUR TYPE BY TAKE BUTTON
BIG
TOTAL BET 32
CREDIT 6000

NORMAL TYPE



5TH WIN 500
4TH WIN 160
3RD WIN 80
2ND WIN 40
1ST WIN 20
YOU WON!!
SPECIAL BONUS
TAKE SCORE
TOTAL BET 32
CREDIT 6000

HI-LO 5 CARD TYPE



5TH WIN 500
4TH WIN 160
3RD WIN 80
2ND WIN 40
1ST WIN 20
CHOOSE YOUR TYPE BY TAKE BUTTON
TOTAL BET 32
CREDIT 6000

HI-LO 3 CARD TYPE

DYNA

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Sports Arena and Smart's *Prize Circus;* Godzilla merchandise for cranes, rotaries, and redemption counters just in time for the May 20 movie release; new lines of licensed merchandise for Barbie, Rugrats, Winnie the Pooh, and Looney Tunes; licensed redemption plush; plush packs for endangered species, Live To Ride, and Sci-Fi; and the Presentation Line of jewelry that comes in boxes shaped like fruits, ice cream cones, pianos, roses, bears, and more.

Hamilton Mfg. Corp. (749)
(800)837-5561, (419)867-4858
A full line of token vendors, bill changers, and bill validators will be available.

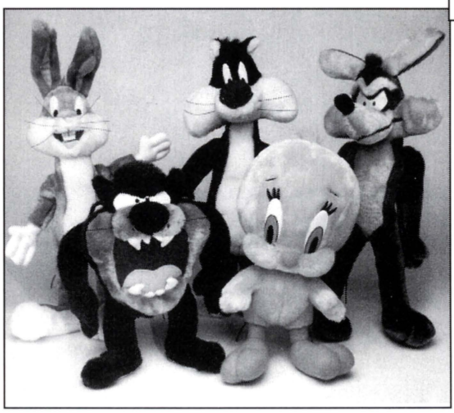
HanaHo Games USA (1016)
(562)483-1414
The A-33 Showcase cabinets will be shown as well as the *Skill Shot* redemption game with a host of operator-adjustable features and options in an arcade model and nightclub/restaurant model.

Happ Controls (424)
(888)BUYHAPP, (847)593-6130
Slated for exhibit are the uzi-style optical gun, newly designed optical gun PCB, validator coin door, and new catalog that contains 45-plus new pages of products for the amusement and spare parts industries.

Hoffman Mint (1420)
(800)227-5813, (408)625-5333
Look for tokens; custom die-struck souvenir coins and keytags; the Wildlife Medal Line of collectible, limited edition medals, coins, and keytags featuring images of the bald eagle, cougar, and Pacific sea otter; and the Dino Coins Line with 11 dinosaur images and text shown in blister card retail packs.

Holoplex (438)
(626)793-9616
A new motion capture video game, *Thundercam,* will bring action-based games to a new level. *Thundercam* interfaces a player's motions with the video game. No special gears are required; two players can engage in animated combat through video cameras.

King Plush's Featured License Mix



Hot Hits (1218)
(800)248-4848, (615)259-3234
Compilation discs and the latest releases in country, pop, rock, r&b, adult contemporary, and pop dancing will be on display.

ICE (716)
(716)759-0370
Look for cranes *(Plush Bus, Sports Bus)*, coin pushers *(Splash Down, Pirate's Treasure, Soccer Shot)*, sports games *(Putting Challenge II, Hoop Fever)*; videos *(Armageddon, EggVenture, Kick-It)*; universal cabinets; and more.

Ideal Software Systems (1610)
(800)964-3325, (601)693-1673
A complete line of software and hardware needs for family entertainment centers will be shown, such as POS, Redemption Center Manager, and Cost Control Manager.

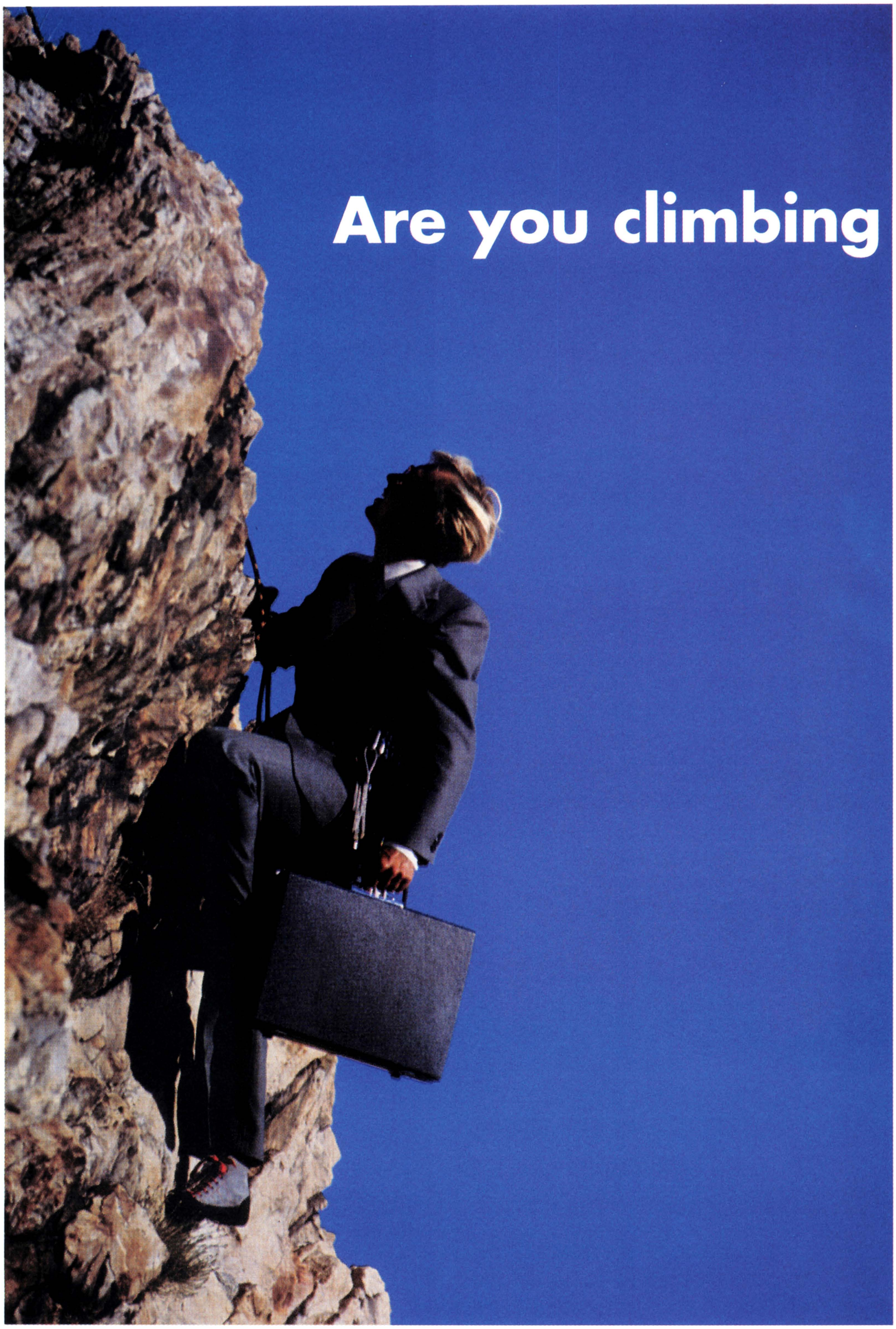
Incredible Technologies (216)
(800)262-0323, (847)870-7027
Golden Tee 3D Golf '98 will debut with all-new artwork and six new 18-hole golf courses; also a *Golden Tee 3D Golf '97* update, and the tournament version of *World Class Bowling* with an update for both regulation and flash bowling games (regular and tournament play). Check out the *Golden Tee '97* live national playoffs at the IT booth.

Infinite Peripherals (1540)
(800)278-7860
Look for miniprinters including the Citizen iDP-3541RF receipt printer, a dot-matrix unit that can be mounted inside a cabinet for redemption receipts; also, a variety of thermal and dot-matrix miniprinters and mechanisms for OEM applications such as panel-mount printers, stand-alone printers, and portable battery-powered printers.

HARLEY-DAVIDSON

Kiddies Mfg.'s Harley-Davidson motorcycle replica kiddie ride

Intel Corp. (838)
(408)765-9051
At press time the games and software devel-



Are you climbing mountains that you don't need to?

Premier Data Corporation, the company that offers scalable software solutions to the coin-op industry, wants you to know that you don't have to climb the mountain to enjoy the view from the top. In anticipation of your needs—from route and arcade management software to customization, from desktop to client/server solutions—we are working hard to make your business decisions easy. Premier Data Corporation providing a new generation of software.

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opers appearing at the booth had not been iced down, except for Streak Technology. Still, anticipation runs high for product on display and information at the Intel seminar (see show schedule).

Island Design (435)
(707)547-4850
The company will show the bopping-stomping game *Spider Stompin' Deluxe* and the coin roll down game *Vortex* where the coin rolls around a funnel and tickets are awarded if a target is hit.

JC Pacific Trading Co. (1820)
(212)764-1977
This first time exhibitor is a direct importer of reasonably priced plush items for cranes and redemption counters. Choose from 200 colorful items including animals, happy faces, aliens, dice, and plush cars.

JCM American (1419)
(702)651-0000
See a full range of bill validators and coin and currency handling equipment.

JVL (1446)
(800)296-6657
Get by the booth to see the latest *Concorde* countertop game that features over 40 games, super VGA graphics, touchscreen, and CD-ROM platform.

Jaleco (1806)
(847)215-1811
The company is planning to show *Over Rev,* a driving video; *Stamp Magic*, a photo stamp machine; and *Tetris II*, a video kit.

Kemac Distributing (1246)
(800)533-5115, (732)240-4612
The new spring line-up will be on display: toys, electronics, and licensed products including Disney, Looney Tunes, Richard Scarry, Mr. Potato Head, Barbie, Winnie the Pooh, Play-Doh, Silly Putty, MLB, and NASCAR.

Kiddie Ride Enterprises (1235)
(800)858-7433, (516)586-6059
The licensed Sesame Street line of kiddie rides will debut: *Big Bird Airways Plane, EZ Rider Elmo & Zoe Race Car,* and the *1-2-3 Bert & Ernie Fire Engine.* All rides are educational and interactive with music and sound.

Kiddie Rides USA (1308)
(800)448-6888, (303)399-7191
The *Mr. Potato Head* rides will be highlighted—the *Tater Totter* and the *Spudmobile*—along with the *Speed Racer Mach 5* car, *Tonka* truck rides, *Bozo the Clown* rides, and the *Musical Gumball Machine.*

Kiddies Mfg. (846)
(888)898-1144, (847)550-6564
A full line of licensed rides will be shown including Marvel character rides *Spiderider, Incredible Hulk,* and *X-Men*; the *Heritage Springer Harley-Davidson* motorcycle replica; and NFL Properties' *NFL Helmet* ride.

King Plush (1616)
(800)473-3402, (310)834-0499
Look for new feature license mix with 20 plush characters, among them Mickey Mouse, Tasmanian Devil, Fred Harley-Hog, and Tweety Bird, as well as other redemption merchandise and licensed Disney items.

Konami (1400)
(847)215-5100
Videos will include *Tera Burst*, a two-player machine gun game; *Battle Tryst*, a two-player fighter; *Skiers High*, a ski simulator; *Racing Jam Super Deluxe*; and *Fighting Bujustu.* Also on display: the music machine *Hip Hop Mania* and the photo sticker machine *Photo Friends*, (formerly *Puri Puri Canvas*).

Lazer-Tron (1024)
(510)460-0873
Look for the company's all-new Video Redemption System, which will offer six different popular video redemption games in one unit. Other products on display will include the *Match Em Up*, a unique new skillstop; *Roll a Rainbow,* challenging players to roll seven balls into seven different slots; the new *Prize Zone* arcade countertop game and 27" arcade model.

L.A.I. Group (248)
(714)373-2993
You'll see an array of products in this booth including locks, coin counters and sorters, money handling equipment, joysticks and buttons, and a line of bulk vending units.

Magikkastle (1649)
(819)842-4223
Look for a full line of video game cabinets.

Mazzco (1346)
(630)616-8200
Products on display will include billiard supplies, material and coin handling, vending parts and supplies, monitors, power supplies, and other electrical items.

Meltec (1226)
(503)643-8312
Check out two popular redemption pieces, *Big Mouth 2000* and *Knock Down 2000,* and possibly a few more redemption attractions.

Merit Industries (1600)
(215)639-4700
In addition to its *Typhoon Air Hockey,* the

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CANDY CRANE KITS®

DELIVERED FASTER THAN A SPEEDING BULLET... MORE POWERFULL THAN ALL THE REST... ABLE TO LEAP PROFITS IN A SINGLE ORDER...

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company will be displaying its new *Megatouch XL 5000* series with new games, linking capabilities, advertising screens, and expanded bookkeeping; and its *ScorpionDX* darts with full modem capabilities, expanded operator and player features, and the League Tracker for paperless leagues.

Micro Manufacturing (629)
(615)793-5510
The featured item, Micro's *Global Touch HD,* is a multigame touch screen video game system available in 19" upright and 13" mini upright models. It comes equipped with a powerful hard drive that allows full motion video. Also being exhibited: *Turbo Poker II, Magical Odds, Major Poker Deluxe,* and *Berry Bonus.*

Mission Crane Service (1435)
(888)660-7253
Look for the following skill cranes on display: *Oakmont, Fairmont, Colonial, Frontier, Santa Fe,* and *Premier.* Four different sizes will be shown including the 30" space saver, standard 36" and 42" models, and the new 60" mass merchandiser.

Muncie Novelty (1330)
(765)288-8301
Stop by this booth for all your ticket needs.

Namco (608)
(630)238-2248
New games include the redemption piece *Jackpot Pusher,* the first redemption piece manufactured in the United States; the much-awaited *Time Crisis 2* gun game exhibited at ATEI; and the company's high-tech, high-touch simulator *Downhill Biker,* a mountain bike game that can be linked to three other units. Namco will also show production models of *Final Furlong, Motocross Go!,* and *Rapid River.*

National Electronic Technologies (1810)
(506)847-4969
Look for *Officer Owl* and other capsule vending attractions.

National Ticket (1210)
(717)672-2900
Redemption tickets for coin-op games will be available in stock, custom-printed, and barcoded formats, as well as wristbands for admission and point-of-purchase systems. Also on display: tyvek Ultra Bands and vinyl wristbands and a ticket eater that counts and shreds 13 tickets per second.

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- ***plus experience***

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- General Video
- I.C.E.
- Incredible Technology
- JVL
- Konami
- Lazer-Tron
- Mars
- Medalist
- Merit Dart
  - *Mega Touch*
- MTX Speakers
- Rock-Ola
  - *Can Vendor*
- Rowe
  - *Bill Changers*
  - *Phonographs*
  - *Vending*
- Sega
- Skee-Ball
- Smart
- SNK
- NEO GEO
- Tommy Gate
- Valley
  - *Pool*
  - *Tornado Table Soccer*
  - *Dart*
- Vendo Can Vendor

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Randy Fromm
EXCLUSIVELY
IN
PLAY METER
Magazine

Neonetics (928)
(410)521-1962
You'll love these neon-accented pictures and the latest in lighting products.

New Mark Enterprises (1442)
(801)484-2227
Following on the heels of the successful *BubbleGum Park*, the company will introduce *Sports Mania*, an interactive gumball dispenser that features lights and music. The gumball makes its way to a spinning soccer ball or basketball and then is fired out of a cannon at a specific target.

New Orleans Plush (104)
(504)488-3505
Look for wholesale plush, stuffed animal pre-packs, bulk and redemption trade-up merchandise. All product orders are shipped the same day.

NSM-America (1408)
(630)860-5100
Slated for display, its line of CD jukeboxes: Full-sized floor model *Sapphire;* the wall-mount *Emerald Ice; Performer Grand 2000; Performer Wall 2000; Nostalgia Gold* with its classic look.

OK Manufacturing (1418)
(801)974-9116
The gumball vending veterans at OK will be at ASI with the new *Classic* bulk candy machine and *Kinetic Kid*—which features three different shows in one machine—as well as the fully electronic *Gumball Coaster* and the spiral gumball series that includes *Mini Roadrunner, Candy Slide,* and *Roadrunner.*

One Stop Toy Co. (746)
(818)734-1644
Stop by this booth to see a full range of candy crane mixes, seasonal items, and a selection of plush.

Oriental Trading Co. (1020)
(800)228-8884
Among the newest products to be displayed: a summer redemption kit, Kid's Meal promotion items, metallic aliens, alien novelties, a complete HappySack party/promo bag, 1998 catalog, and electronics including a fiber optic lamp, neon clocks, and assorted radios.

P&E Technologies (427)
(908)872-9800
Look for parts and supplies for the Vendgame line, *Street Hoops*, 8-line kits and cabinets, and other game accessories.

Peninsula Vending (620)
(800)266-3589, (408)978-3588
The new Cartoon Network sticker series will be shown plus the new NBA series and die-cut NHL mask and NASCAR series.

Pentranic Inc. (1248)
(905)428-7020
New touch screen monitors and multimedia monitors are slated for the booth.

Play-By-Play Toys and Novelties (1035)
(210)829-4666
The company will exhibit plush, toys, and novelties including an impressive line of licensed items.

Play Meter Magazine (1320)
(504)488-7003
Stop by so we can meet you and hear what you have to say about the industry!

Plush-4-Play/Natl. Crane Network (432)
(714)893-8099
You'll be treated to a huge selection of merchandise items including plush, kid's and adult's novelties, key chains, pens, whistles, and a lot more. Also see licensed products like NASCAR and Looney Tunes. Find out details on National Crane Network's program for operators.

Plush Appeal (1448)
(504)482-6100
This company will show customized crane prepacks, stuffed animals, and novelties.

Premier Data (1053)
(217)528-9000
Get by this booth for a demonstration of its latest in route management software, the Super Route Manager '97 with a number of options.

Radar Sales (618)
(612)533-1100
The *Fast Ball* coin-op fast pitch game will be exhibited.

Rainbow Cranes (122)
(800)466-3711, (619)748-7157
Look for the new 30" candy/novelty crane with interchangeable headers for plush, candy, and novelty mixes coupled with programming for standard win counters or reset for a win every time.

Rhode Island Novelty (1443)
(800)435-3456
The company will be showing its redemption merchandise that includes toys, giftware, plush, party supplies, seasonal merchandise, and licensed products.

Rock-Ola (135)
(847)928-2121
Glenn Streeter tells us to look for production units of the company's licensed *Corvette* and *Harley-Davidson* nostalgia boxes as well as its *Rock-Ola 8000,* an upscale addition to to complement the *Legend* and *Rocket* series. There will also be some familiar industry faces, but new to the company, in the Rock-Ola booth.

Rowe International (416)
(973)334-0973
Two new wall-mounted jukeboxes will be on display: the *Berkely* and *Berkely* remote wall selector and an as-yet-unnamed wall unit and remote wall selector with a wood finish and stained glass, perfect for pub-style locations. Also exhibited will be the *Starlight, MM3, Nostalgia,* and *Storm* wall unit and remote wall selector.

Sammy USA (1012)
(847)364-9787
At press time, Sammy confirmed that it will be showing its unique prize vendor for

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Users' Reports

"We really liked our first Token Tech, which is why we ordered our second. I'm calling now to order our third."

"The Token Tech eliminates the need to spend hours making up rolls of 20 and 40 Tokens. We are saving enough labor cost to more than pay for it in less than two months."

"The best investment since we bought our fax machine. I can't ever imagine doing business without either one."

"We have good employees . . . The Token Tech removes the temptation for them to become "silent partners" by skimming the till."

"It's great! You should have come out with it 10 years ago."

"After using our Token Tech for Quarters, we are switching over to Tokens. Thanks to the dispenser, we got acquainted with your Token Systems."

"The Token Tech eliminates long lines at our cashier's cage. Our customers like it, too!"

"Our Batting Cage Tokens are valued at $1 each. Anyone with a high-value Token should be using a Token Tech."

"We use a larger size Token for our Carwash. All Tokens are sold through the Token Tech. It's accurate, and much faster, and it keeps our people honest."

"The first two Token Techs are excellent. We are sending our purchase order for six additional units."

"It's working just perfect. We love it!"

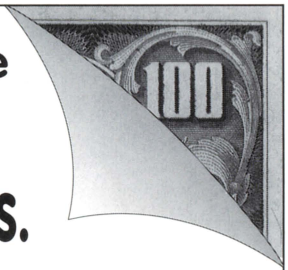
"For a $3 Cigarette Token, it's the only way to do business."

"We were using a system which had the "illusion of control" . . . The first shift manager counted all our Tokens. The third shift manager emptied all the cashboxes, and did a day-end count."

"The Token Tech has simplified our whole operation, and we know exactly where we stand every hour."

"We bought a similar item, made in Europe. It cost a lot more, but it never worked right, so we sent it back. Your Token Tech is far superior."

If you want to take more of these to the Bank every week . . .



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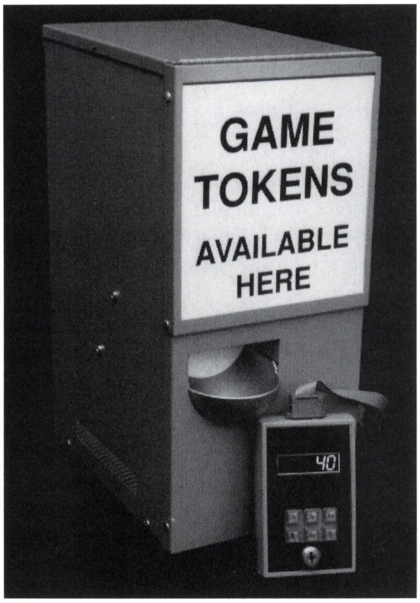
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.882	9,000	1.000	7,500
.900	9,000	1.125	6,000

Coin	Capacity	Coin	Capacity
US Quarter	7,000	Brazilian 20 Cruzados	4,500
Canadian 25¢	8,000	Venezuela 1 Bolivar	5,000
Australian 20¢	5,000	Chile 1 Peso	4,500
Canadian Dollar	6,000	Ecuador 1 Sucre	4,000

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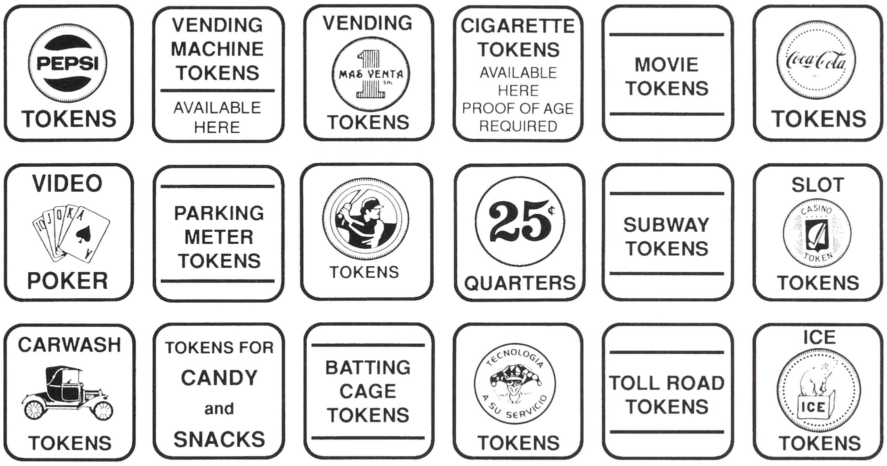
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Many Stock Signs available. Custom Signs (black & white or color) designed to order.

sports and novelty items, *Sports Arena*. Stop by the booth for a few surprises.

Sega GameWorks (1204)
(650)802-3100
New games on display will include *Harley-Davidson & L.A. Riders,* the *Model 3* motorcycle game; the new fishing simulator *Sega Bass Fishing; Sega Water Ski,* the pro water ski attractions; and *Sega Rally 2*. Sega is also exhibiting *The Lost World: Jurassic Park* and *The House of the Dead*.

Sega Pinball (1200)
(703)345-7700
While mysterious when asked about its next pinball product, ASI attendees are sure to find the company's stalwart redemption games: *Austin Powers, Cut The Cheese,* and *Udderly Tickets*.

Seidel Amusement Machine Co. (1332)
(505)821-6878
Look for *Star Catcher,* a two-player game featuring a coin launcher, ticket multiplier, and vortex propelling coins into a new dimension; *Hitter's Rally*, which features real bat and ball action, right and left hand play, two-player competition, and four operator-selectable options; and the classic *Smokin' Token*.

Selectra International (1534)
(800)332-2569, (718)931-4800
Four models of the Selectron sticker machines will be exhibited as well as stickers (including smiles and tie-dye), tattoos, maxi-tattoos (oversize), and brand-new metallic tattoos.

Sharp Image Electronics (1639)
(818)341-8000
A complete line of amusement and gaming monitors will be shown, from CGA to SVGA, in sizes from 9" to 39". The company also does customized monitors for contract manufacturers.

Silent Partner 2000 (632)
(217)787-4232
Stop by for a demonstration of the Route Management Software Version 15 for Windows 95.

Skee-Ball Inc. (1224)
(215)997-8900
Look for the company's variety of *Skee-Ball* alley bowlers, also the *Demolition Zone* and completely redone *Rage in the Cage*.

Smart Industries (1008)
(515)265-9900
Smart will feature its *Circus Prize*, a self-contained merchandiser; the *Smart Ticket Center* for redeeming tickets; a complete line of *Clean Sweep* cranes ranging from 26" to 60" wide; and the *Showcase Magnetic Crane*.

SNK Corp (200)
(408)292-4550
A new-gun game platform is expected for the Hyper Neo-Geo 64, as well as last fall's introductions, *Road's Edge* and *Samurai Shodown 64*.

Streak Technology (838)
(408)432-1613
Slated for display: a PC-based, single player motion simulator platform (joint venture with BrainCo., shown at ATEI). See it in two booths: Intel and Sega/Data East.

Sureshot Redemption (828)
(888)887-8738, (408)937-8738
Hot new products include high-quality, retail-look items such as Screamer Balls; action playsets; volcano, disco, and sparkle lights; better quality electronics; collectible die-cast cars and motorcycles; glow-in-the-dark items; and some Liberty plush prizes. Sureshot is working with King Plush to offer pre-packs.

Theisen Vending (1621)
(800)633-3436, (612)827-5588
Look for rides from Jolly Roger including *Lowly Worm Apple Car, Snoopy Dog House* (#1 new ride according to the NKRA), *Little Monsters School Bus,* and the brand-new *Mighty Mouse*; also rides from R.G. Mitchell including *Firefox Helicopter, NASA Space*

Late Additions

Amcoe/Amuchine (1644)
(908)281-5583

ATM Express (1824)
(410)437-9299

Axxess Technologies (1541)
(602)731-6699

Biello Enterprises (1641)
(602)787-0388

Ceronix (143)
(530)888-1044

Champion Mfg. (443)
(817)284-3499

Crystal Art Gallery (441)
(213)680-3523

DK Monicore (1821)
(847)884-0669

Dixie-Narco (1232)
(803)266-5000

Dyeflex Creation (648)
(626)432-7225

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Goffa International (346)
(718)361-8883

IAAPA (116)
(703)836-4800

IAFEC (144)
(603)464-6498

Jukebox Licence Office (115)
(615)320-4000

Mainland Bridge USA (242)
(718)384-3868

Nancy Sales Co. (1316)
(617)884-1700

Neotec Graphic International (243)
(909)626-9889

New Vision Enterprises (101)
(510)763-1991

Noel Industries (1212)
(813)585-7630

Northcoast Capital Leasing (432)
(216)892-4550

Number One Import & Wholesale (442)
(213)617-7681

The Premium Connection (1646)
(702)434-6900

Quantum 3D (1038)
(408)919-9999

Raymond Gedde's & Co. (1805)
(410)238-4938

Scan Coin (1529)
(703)729-8600

Sherman Specialty Toy Co. (635)
(516)546-7400

Standard Change Makers (727)
(317)899-6966

Star Track (1229)
(516)293-6654

Sticker Inc. (1542)
(908)609-9495

Totuma International (111)
(713)222-1277

Treasure Sounds of America (728)
(516)887-0600

TubeWORKS (148)
(818)879-2386

Rocket, American Roadster, and *Safari Jeep*—all approved by Wal-Mart's premium ride program.

Tommy Gate Co. (100)
(800)543-8428, (712)647-2050
Check out the hydraulic liftgate with extruded aluminum platform and other models (over 70) that fit a variety of vehicles including pickups, service and utility bodies, stakebeds, flatbeds, cubevans, cargo vans, and dump bodies; lifting capacities range from 500 to 2,000 lbs.

TouchTunes Digital Jukebox (1813)
(888)338-JUKE, (847)419-3300
Featuring: the *TouchTunes Digital Jukebox* that produces CD-quality sound using the latest MPEG 1 Layer III technology with MMP encryption, 4.5 gigabyte hard drive, and touch screen selector—built by Bose, the speaker and electronics company.

U.S. Toy Co. (1028)
(816)761-5900
This direct importer of redemption prizes will display novelties, plush, toys, and candy, with an emphasis on non-violent educational toys.

Ultrazone (106)
(702)734-3617
See a full line of laser tag equipment including vests and laser guns that offer a wide range of playing experiences.

United Machine Corp. (1520)
(800)833-4667, (732)286-1120
The *Bean Bag* crane will be on display in its flexible cabinet, also the *Treasure Chest* and *South Beach* cranes.

Valley Recreation Products (400)
(800)248-2837, (517)892-4536
A full line of pool tables, air hockey, foosball, and electronic darts will be on display plus new laminates for the foosball table and a black light kit for pool tables.

VeQtor USA (646)
(619)747-0840
Laser tag systems are the specialty—choose from several different arena configurations and auxiliary equipment.

Wells-Gardner Electronics (1119)
(773)292-5646
The company will display its new 34" VGA monitor, K7500 series mid-resolution chassis, and 19" WGII low-cost monitor.

Wide Way Inc. (1809)
(562)634-9488
Plush toys and animals are the specialty. The company prides itself on unique designs, fair pricing, and good service.

Williams Electronics Games (800)
(773)961-1228
The new upright *Touchmaster* countertop will be shown along with the *Hyperdrive* space racing-themed video and possibly a new pinball.

Wurlitzer Jukebox Co. (1801)
(800)987-5840, (201)807-2616
The *One More Time Princess* will be highlighted. It holds 120 CDs and has an optional pedestal with the same detailing as the main unit. Also look for the *Rainbow, Rave On,* and *One More Time 1015* floor model.

Zamperla (1216)
(800)888-8878, 973)334-8133
Dragster 2000, one of the largest kiddies rides available (6' x 4' x 5'), will be on display as well as *The Pecos Pony Wild West Horse* that's 5' tall and *The Happy Car*, a bright yellow vehicle with a big smile. ▲

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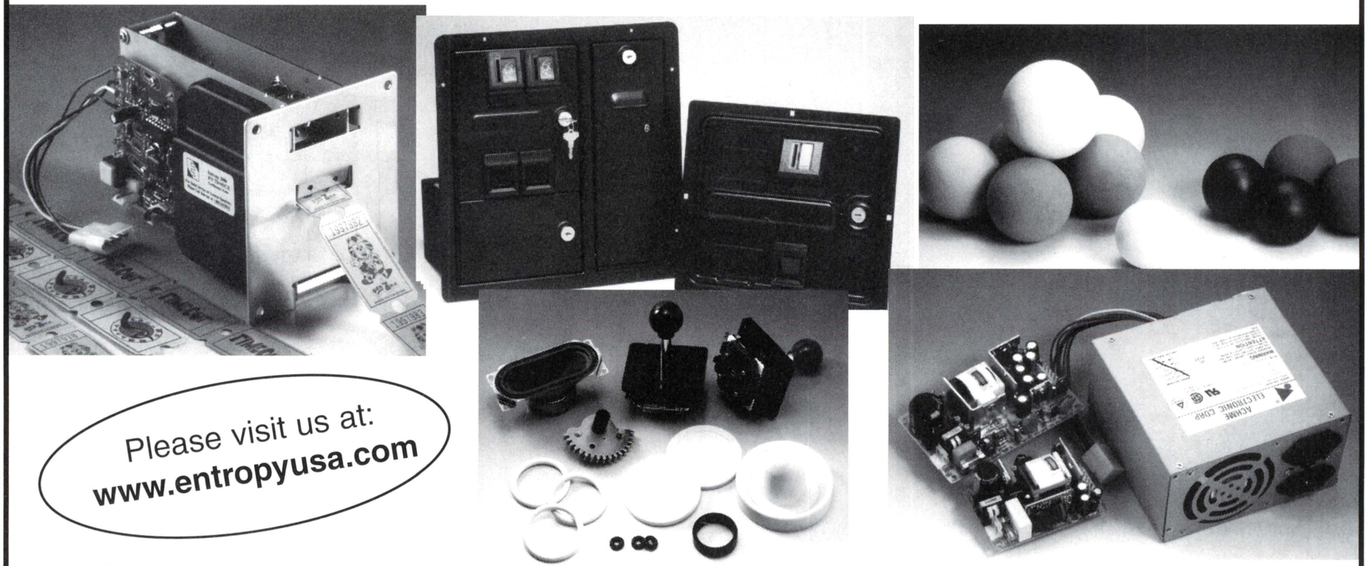

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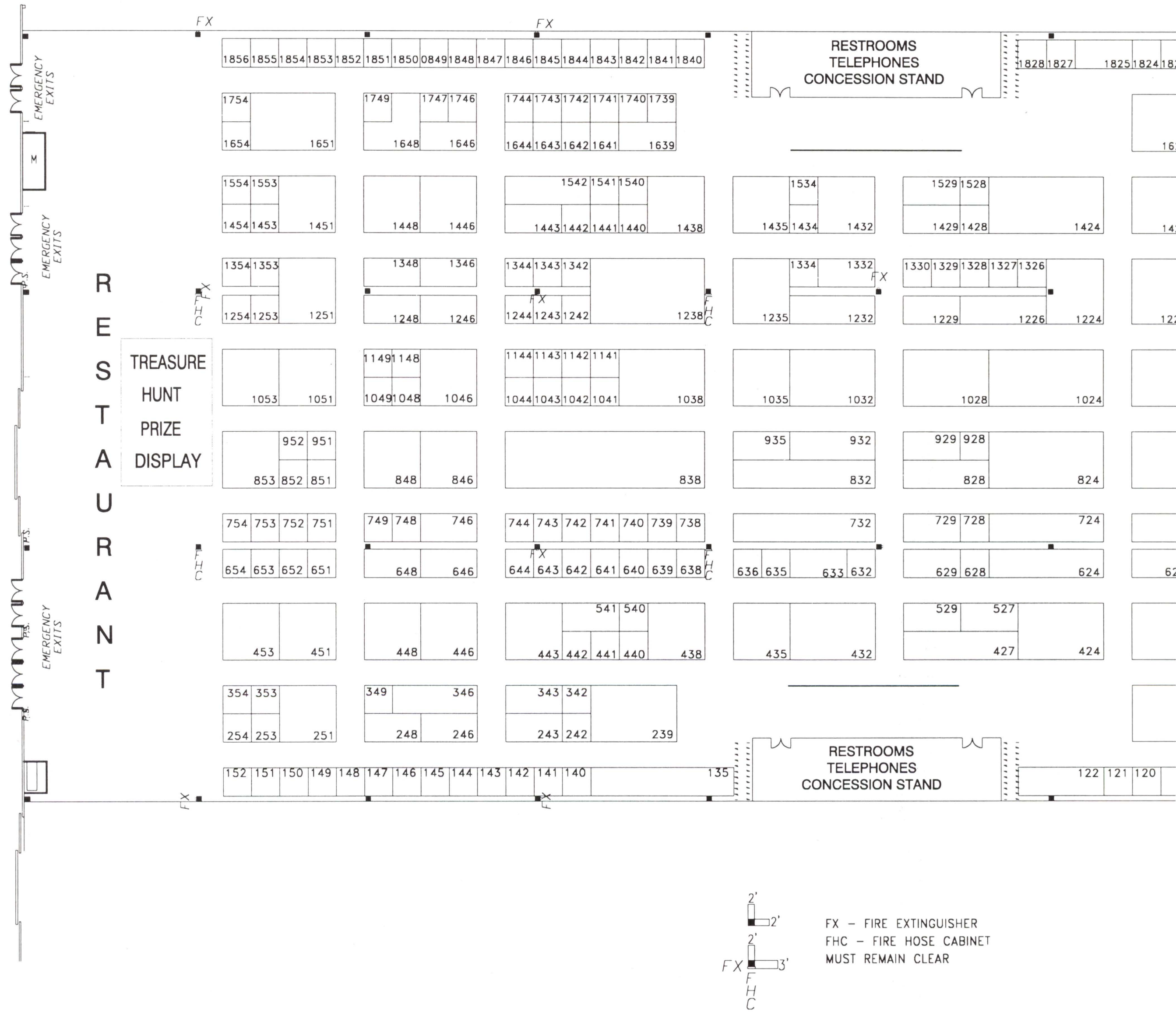
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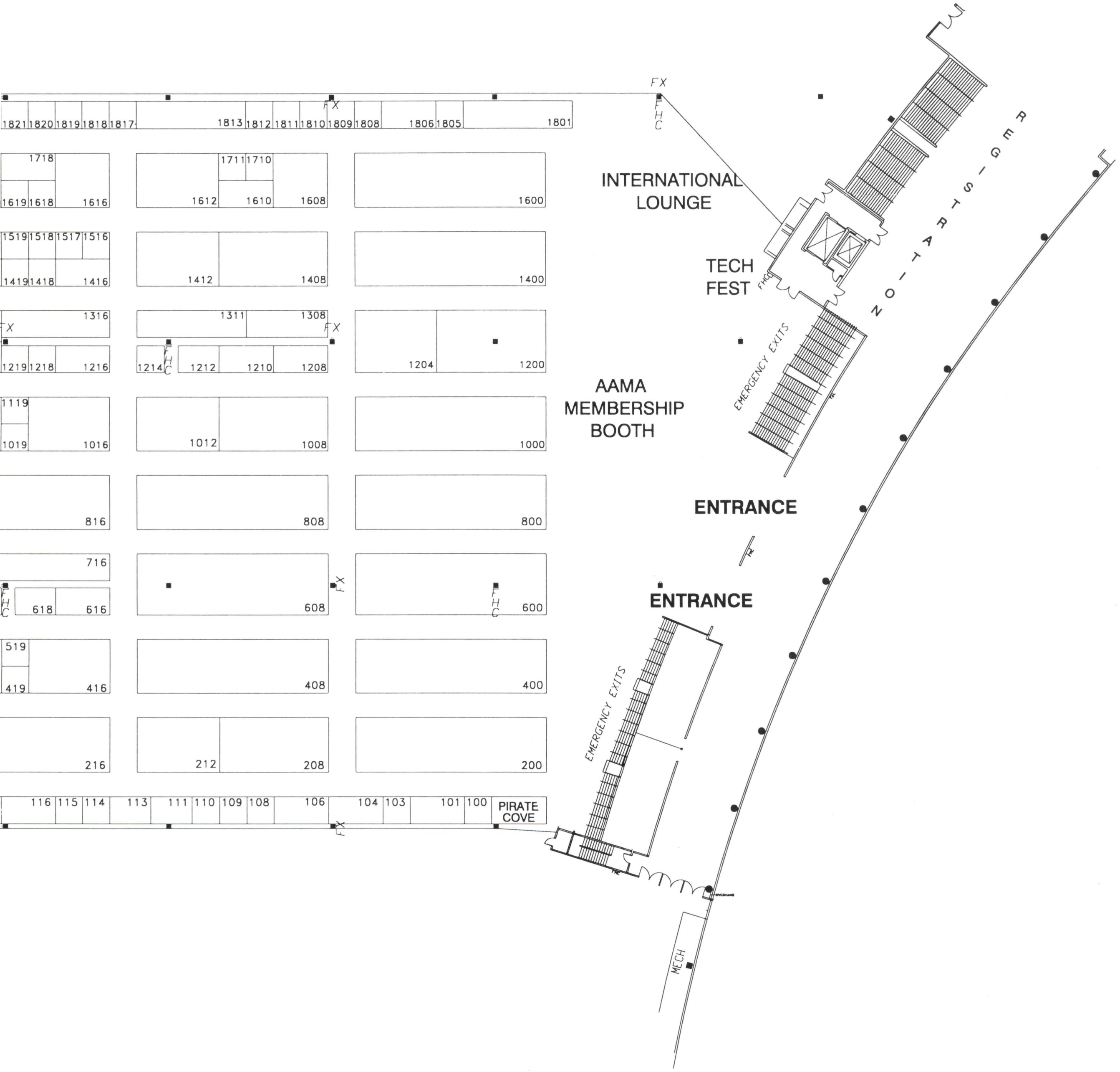
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Coinman Interview with

Dan Sunday of Alpine Vending & Video in Vail, Colo., is just the person to offer his candid opinions, advice, and a look at the future of our industry. His company is a full-line vending and game company that has been in business since 1981. He serves on the board of directors of the Amusement and Music Operators Association, which he calls a very worthwhile endeavor.

Prior to falling in love with the coin machine industry, Dan earned a degree in horticulture and was making a living as a landscape contractor in California. He jokes that one of his clients seemed to always have a lot of money in his pocket, so when Dan found out he was in the coin-op business, Dan decided that was the line of work for him! Well, maybe it wasn't quite that simple, but he did start his own business, he's successful, so it must have been the right decision.

Since you got into this business have you been fairly happy with everything?

You're never happy with everything! It seems like our industry goes in cycles. We'll have a couple of years with good equipment, we'll have another couple of years when the manufacturers are asleep at the wheel, and then they'll come out with some new stuff again. I think the biggest threat and biggest disappointment is the quality of games available in the home market. Some are excellent. And if we get them at all, sometimes it takes a long time after they've already been in the home market.

How would you describe our current cycle?

We just hit the bottom of the last cycle, and we're on our way up. I think the simulators are starting the new cycle, and finally the fighting game era is over. The manufacturers are coming out with new games that are more appealing to the masses. Back in the early '80s we had *Pac-Man* and some other games that virtually everyone could and would play. In the last five or six years we had mostly fighting games. Granted, they made a tremendous amount of money at first, and every now and then there's a new one that makes money, but they appeal to the young male crowd. As an operator we are trying to attract other players like females and adults. We haven't had anything until recently with the golf games, and *Blitz* is excellent for broad appeal.

Do you do anything to promote your games?

We're not in a big city and often don't have the same people playing our games. It's very difficult to run leagues because many people have to hold down more than one job just to live here. That shows the dedication they have to living here, but they don't have time to play in leagues. It's hard to do the traditional things to get people to the games. However, we do rotate the games, and because people have so little leisure time we have to keep our equipment spotlessly clean. Our promotion is the quality of our equipment and how visible we can make the games to someone walking by.

If you were on a panel with a group of competitors, what would you say were your strong points?

We are a highly ethical company. We provide great equipment with great service. Our service makes a difference.

What would you say to operators who complain about how bad the business is?

Some of it is self-induced. They are afraid to pay the going price for equipment, so they don't buy new games. On the other hand if they make too many wrong decisions, they can be out of business. We didn't see any of the downturn until about 18 months ago, even though I'd been hearing about it for three years. We are a little insulated because of the people who come here. Our business in May is only 20 percent of what we do in March. Everything is so expensive here. We pay for warehouse space here what they pay for top floor skyscrapers in Denver. That's why it's so important to make the right decisions. The wrong ones are expensive.

VALERIE COGNEVICH

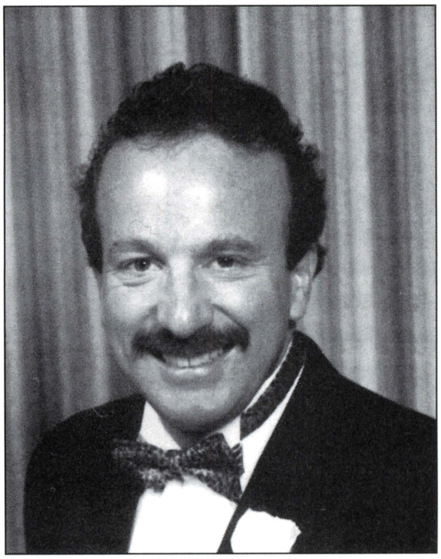
The game end of the industry is fairly volatile. With the right decisions and the right locations there's money to be made in any area. But you can just as easily go the other way. That's why operators have to do their homework. Don't jump before you look. In the past it was easy to jump before looking because times were good. But when you jump too many times now you're in big trouble. I stare at the ceiling sometimes wondering where our industry is headed. Will we be extinct in 10 years? Even with home computers, I don't really think so. But any new operators getting into the business right now better have pretty deep pockets and a willingness to work really hard.

You consider yourself a medium-sized operator. Do you think you've felt the squeeze more than extremely large or small operators?

The larger operators have the money to do more. The small ones don't have any overhead so they are not as vulnerable. We have definitely felt the squeeze in the last 18 months. We were growing dramatically for awhile, 100 percent a year for 10 years. Then what was happening as an industry caught up with us. Then we had to rethink how we were doing business, like not being afraid to ask for a higher percentage from locations. It's a touchy subject but you just have to do it. You just can't make money the old way anymore. Our locations have been very cooperative. Word gets around. We just show them the numbers and they understand.

But obviously you still find the industry worthwhile.

Dan Sunday



Sometimes I wonder! Seriously, it's a huge amount of work. And here it's all at one time. If one of our accounts calls, we better be there quick. That's what I meant about service. It's critical in this business. But it's not just in my area. Every operator should have service as his number one priority.

As an operator, what do you think about the open arcade PC platform?

I don't know that much about it. In fact, I don't think I could really explain the concept. However, I'm watching it. I think it would transform the industry if they pull it off. It will change the way we do business. But I have questions. How about distributors? Where would we get equipment? We need our distributors. Every time a distributor folds, that's one less distributor to compete. It's one less place to go.

How would you describe the role of the distributor in today's marketplace?

A distributor wears a number of hats, the most important is providing technical expertise and service to operators. You can buy equipment anywhere. In fact, I have people calling me from out of state all the time wanting me to buy equipment from them, but it would be rare for me to buy out of state. I know when I buy games in Denver, I'm going to get support. If I bought it out of state, I'd be stuck with it.

But what if you could buy out of state and save, say a couple hundred dollars on a game?

That's not enough. My relationship with my distributors is worth more than a few dollars. And all I need is to have a serious problem during a busy time, and I'll lose more than $200. On the other hand, we always have problems with new equipment and my distributor works with me. They know how seasonal my business is. They'll go so far as to take a part out of another game they have in stock so my game isn't down during my busy time.

I think distributors are far more important than most operators will tell you. They have to make money too. I don't mind paying their prices, but I do expect to get what I pay for.

Do you have a few comments on trade shows?

Going to trade shows is very valuable, especially AMOA because it represents my core business. Now I know that sounds like I'm biased since I'm on the AMOA board, but it's not just that. I take my key employees and we pick the equipment for our upcoming winter season, the biggest for us. Plus, I can take my distributors around and show them the product I like. You can accomplish more at a trade show than I could tell you here. And I know that when I get back from the trade show, I can pick up the phone and call someone I met who works for a manufacturer and he won't just blow me off if I leave a message. He'll remember me. I want the face to face meeting, although I don't intend to skirt the distributor to talk with a manufacturer. But you just never know when you might have to contact them about something that I can't get accomplished through the distributor.

Another reason I go to trade shows is that I live in a fairly small market and may see something that my distributor doesn't intend to bring in. So I can convince him to bring it in or bring one in just for me. If an operator tells me that he can't afford to go to a trade show, I say he can't afford NOT to go. No matter what size your business is, it's a minor investment for what you get. In general, the seminars are good too. I look for seminars on technical training for my employees. The only other way to train them is to send them to one of our suppliers with some broken equipment and help them fix it. Randy Fromm is excellent.

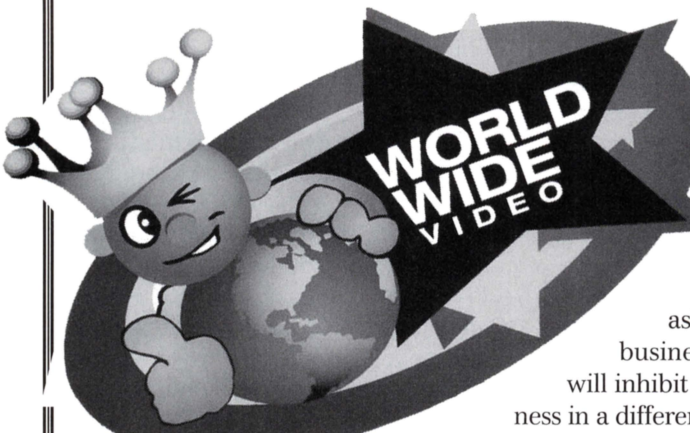
I'm also looking for some management advice. I feel like I live in a cave sometimes. I may not be in the middle of nowhere, but you can see it from here! Sometimes we don't realize someone has already invented the wheel we're trying to invent until we get away from our little enclave here. That's one thing I like about being on the AMOA board. I can't really call up one of my competitors because I don't think we'll share any intimate secrets, but I can go to the AMOA meeting with operators from all over the country and they don't feel threatened about telling me everything they know. And vice versa. I can share information and learn a lot.

What do you see as major changes ahead for our industry?

There is one thing that has the potential to revolutionize our industry: downloading music. That will be huge. But I'm afraid to buy a jukebox right now because I'm afraid I won't make my money back on it. I've signed up to take some of the TouchTunes jukeboxes, but I'm hesitating because I'm just not sure about it quite yet. The folks there have assured me that they aren't going after locations, they've said they will only go through operators. But operators are a suspicious lot! And that's a learned behavior! But I don't think there's any question that the industry is heading that way. We aren't going to have CDs in our jukeboxes anymore. If we don't do it as operators, I'm afraid our accounts will do it without us. So we have to be a part of it, but I'm just not sure what our role will be. ▲

WORLDWIDE VIDEO ENTERTAINMENT Defines Its Role As National Distributor

Embroiled in litigation with Sega over the importation of parallel imports, Worldwide Video Entertainment of San Diego, Calif., found itself in the headlines of trade publications and on the tongues of many members of the coin-op industry last year. But company president Brad Brown, long an outspoken advocate of his ideas, is no stranger to controversy. Following an out-of-court settlement of the parallel issue last fall, Brown talked with Play Meter about his past, present, and vision of the future.



Often described as controversial or a maverick, Brad Brown is someone who thinks closely about the role he plays in the amusement game industry.

"It is easy to place what is perceived as a negative label on someone, whom you know little about, which will cause damage to their credibility," Brown responds when asked about such descriptions of him. "I think it is a common business practice to try and defeat a competitor, hoping this label will inhibit customers from calling and learning more about doing business in a different and quite possibly better way.

"If the maverick name was used in a different context, if it was perceived in a positive way such as: one who is not afraid to go on his own and is not afraid to lead instead of follow, then your question would probably never have been asked. I'm proud to be a `maverick' in its most positive sense. I speak my mind. I'm not afraid to tackle tough issues."

As a self-described national distributor, Brown is also someone who understands the power of words. He publishes his own quarterly newsletter, which is sent out to more than 2,000 operators, and argues that information is the most valuable form of service he provides to each and every one of his customers.

"Our philosophy is that we are totally in partnership with our customers and their success is the basis for our success," Brown explains. "It is our obligation and duty to inform, educate, and assist our customers with up-to-date and honest information. That is why we spend so much money creating our newsletter and sending it out free to our customers."

In the newsletter, which Brown writes himself, he reviews games currently in operation and shares his hard-won wisdom in a column entitled Strategies for Success, based on current trends culled from conversations with operators across the country, news releases, and marketing strategies.

"If I know Namco, Sega, Acclaim, P & P, Midway, and Atari are all planning to release a gun game in the spring, this would affect my strategy in selling and purchasing the current gun games that are out now," he points out. "As an operator, depending on my particular circumstance, it would suggest either selling off some of my current gun games at a higher resale value or waiting a little longer in anticipation of buying the new ones that are coming out."

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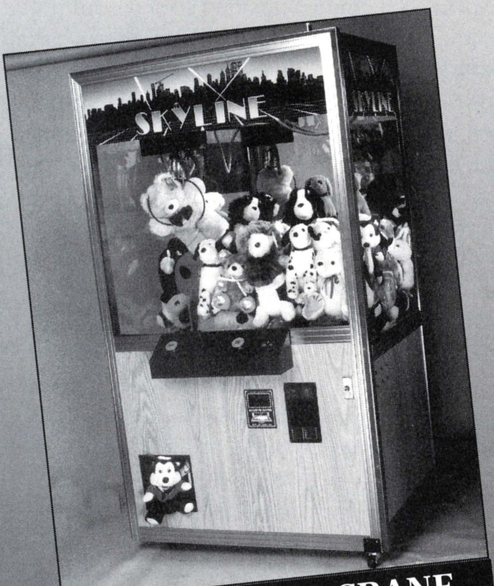

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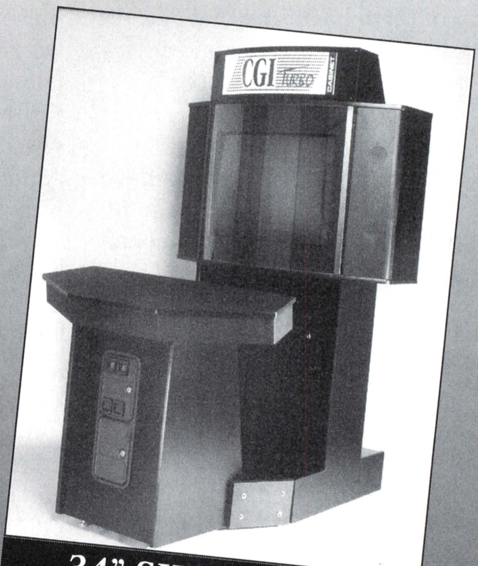

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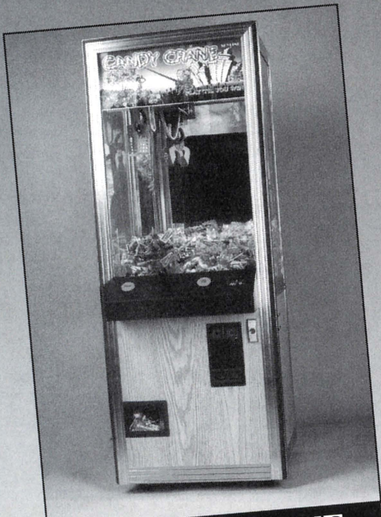

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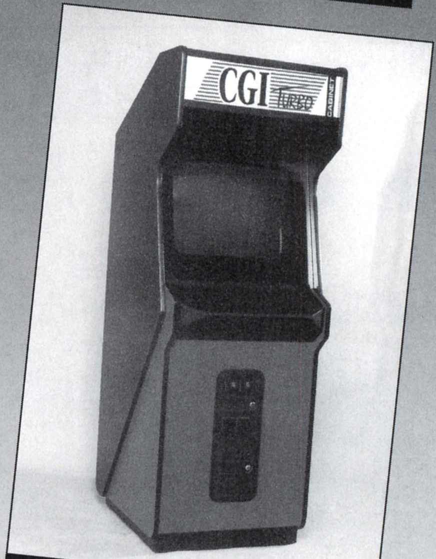

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Based on that information, along with what Brown calls "insiders collection data," operators are able to remain competitive in an increasingly demanding marketplace. "I've had quite a number of our clients call us at the end of the year and thank me personally for helping them out," he says. "Many of them have said that as a direct result of our newsletter and advice they were much more profitable."

A ROCKY START

While Worldwide appears to have hit its stride, Brown's first forays in the coin-op amusement industry did not always meet with the same level of success. He got started in the industry by accident after losing his job as a real estate marketing assistant in Boston during the recession of 1981 when mortgage rates soared close to 20 percent.

"On my way home that fateful day I literally drove by a sign that read Bally Distributing and I knew of Bally from a term paper I had written in college about the slot machine business," he recalled. "When I walked into the showroom floor, I was amazed at all the coin-op equipment for sale and thought `Wow, it would be really fun to sell video games and pinballs.' I spent many nights and lots of dollars playing pinball in college."

Brown was hired by Chuck Arnold, then-president of Bally North East, and worked there for three and a half years under the guidance of Arnold and Rick Kirby. He credits both for the professional skills they passed on to him: Arnold for his vision of the industry and Kirby for his salesmanship skills.

When Bally closed its coin-op distribution business, Betson took over and immediately renamed it New England Coin-Op. Kirby became president and some of the staff was let go including Brown, who made an unsuccessful effort to go it alone. "At that point I knew the business just well enough to try and do it on my own in New England, but the timing and my maturity in the industry was off and it was not enough to sustain me," Brown explained.

Luckily for him a real estate boom was underway in New England, where it was not uncommon for houses to appreciate two percent every week. "Just as I was failing at my own business, I was offered $100,000 more for my house than I paid for it just three years earlier," Brown said. "My wife and I decided to sell and move to California where her parents had just moved. It was the right time for me to start a new life and a new business."

A NEW BEGINNING

Settling in Ventura, Calif., Brown found work with Los Angeles-based Video Ware. His boss, John Hibbs, who many in the industry may remember, was not well respected, according to Brown.

"He was a pioneer at importing parallels and also to my utter disapproval, copy boards," he recalled. "When I agreed to join John in 1986, I insisted the new company we formed have nothing to do with copies and he agreed. I brought integrity and struc-

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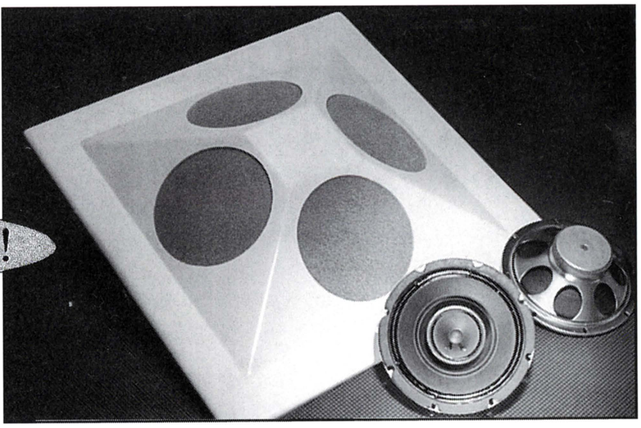

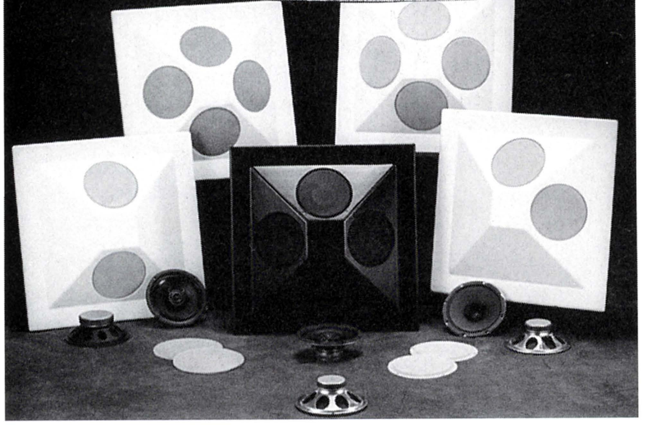

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ture to his new operation, but his reputation was already set in stone and haunted me for years."

Hibbs and Brown licensed their own games from Japan including titles such as *Mission XX*, *Air Wolf*, and—Brown's favorite—*Perfect Billiards*. They also imported original parallel boards.

"John Hibbs was truly a genius in this industry," Brown contends. "His understanding of how the coin-op world operated was extremely insightful. I learned a lot about how the Japanese manufacturers marketed games in the United States and around the world. We spent many hours into the late night discussing the industry, and I took many trips to Asia studying and working with Japanese distributors and manufacturers, learning everything I could about why they were so successful."

These experiences helped form Brown's vision of a distribution company that would ultimately become Worldwide Video Entertainment.

"My vision was based on what I believed the distribution business would look like in 10 years and I started building on that," he said. "At the time I realized that if operators had universal cabinets, kits could be distributed from anywhere. Local distributors want to sell cabinets and dedicated games. To buy and sell kits, there is no need for local distribution."

When Hibbs left the industry, Brown stayed on to form his own company. In 1991, starting all over from scratch and working out of his house with only $5,000 in capital, Brown began anew.

"My vision, as it turned out, was right on the money," he claims today. "We are working out of our own building with 12 full time employees. Our people are caring and dedicated employees who really love their jobs and this industry. I am extremely proud of our organization and the continued success in a tough industry. We have clients in nearly every state and 14 countries, and we are still expanding.

"Worldwide is building an international distribution business with a solid financial foundation that has the ability to focus entirely on our clients' needs rather than just making a sale," Brown continued. "We are providing professional service, and more importantly, honest information. I don't know of many other organizations that duplicate the level of caring and commitment we have towards the street and arcade operator."

NATIONAL DISTRIBUTION

As a national distributor, Worldwide focuses primarily on sales of kits, most notably older games that many distributors are no longer marketing but still have earning power. The company purchases games "through various members of the distribution channel" and resells them to operators.

Worldwide also serves as the exclusive distributor of video kits from Japanese-based Psikyo and has released such hits as *Strikers 1945* and *Pang 3* in recent years. Another as-

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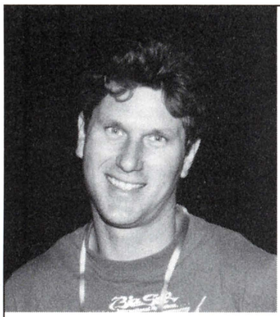
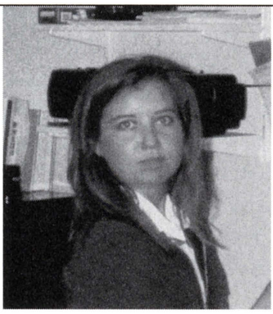
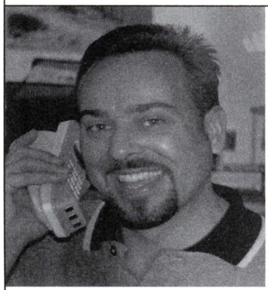
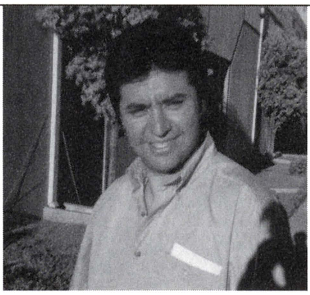
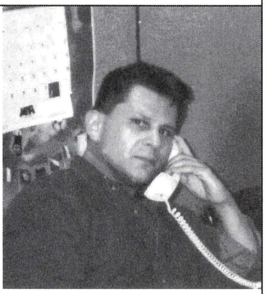

Brad Brown "el presidente"


Lara Morrett "show me the money"

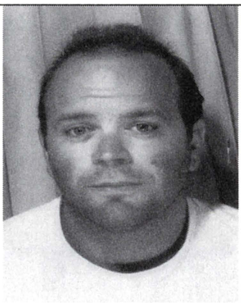
Mark Peacock "our pastor"

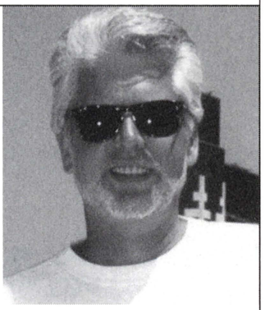

Mike Morris "a deal maker"


Jose Diaz "special team"


Jesse Carrean "Roman Emperor"

Mark Stout "Mr. Non-Stop"


Scott Brown "heavy hitter"


Steve McCaul "Rdemption Guru"

George Noreiga "Guardian Angel"

4417
WORLD WIDE
Home Sweet Home

yet-undisclosed title from Psikyo was in the works at press time, according to Brown.

The company also imports and exports a fair amount of deluxe simulator games and handles some cabinets and parts. "I am very selective about buying and selling used deluxe games," Brown explained. "We look at games two to three years old that still have good value on the street. We are also very specific about what the customer gets in terms of its condition."

While a national distributor is limited in its relationships with customers on a personal level, Worldwide makes up that shortcoming by guaranteeing the same service that a local distributor would provide on the sale of a kit as well as the added value of its corporate independence. "I can be totally open and honest about the product I carry," Brown said. "I don't have to push anybody's product."

That honesty spills over into the aforementioned newsletter, which Brown started as his customer base began to expand. "As my company grew, it became harder and harder to disseminate information," he said. "Rather than relying on all the staff trying to say the same thing but speaking individually, I decided to start the newsletter."

Do honest reviews generate praise or criticism? Both, says Brown. "The most criticism I receive is for panning a game," he explained. "They love me when I say it's a good game but I am only writing what I know. If I don't know, I will say I don't know. If I am cautious about a game, I let my readers know why."

THE PRESENT TENSE

When asked about the most pressing issues facing the industry, one expects Brown to launch into a discussion of his company's recent litigation with industry giant Sega. But he doesn't. Instead, he raises a more abstract and troubling issue—the question of leadership or a lack thereof among industry ranks.

"You will notice, I picked out an issue which deals with the industry's problems emotionally and is not a physical, man-made problem like better games at cheaper prices!" he begins. "I believe that in today's market, this industry lacks forward thinking professional individuals, who are currently in the positions of power and could make a positive difference in their actions."

This lack of leadership becomes magnified, according to Brown, by the tepid attitudes of some industry executives, producing a void in which the people who can most influence the industry are no longer emotionally connected or committed to the business.

"They have stopped caring for the industry and for many of the operators that they serve," he argues. "It is the utter frustration of trying to do what is right for the customer while being forced to sell inferior equipment. The future of this industry is in serious jeopardy, and sadly, it is still being managed this way for short-term profit instead of long-term prosperity. How else can one explain why our fellow operators, distributors, and manufacturers so distrust everyone that the level of apathy and negativity is at an all-time high?

“Leadership is lacking because no one trusts anyone who may have a better idea. Nearly everyone says: `Show it to me, prove it, I don’t need it (even if they don’t know what you’re talking about), if it is so good why are you sharing it with me, etc.’ No leader has gotten through with a powerful and positive enough message that resonates with operators’ hopes and dreams for a better future. No leader has been able to unite operators to work toward one common destiny.”

That common destiny, or at least a forum for exploring it, may lay in renewing the industry’s political organizations, says Brown, who is currently working to re-establish an operators’ association in California. Not surprisingly for Brown, politics may not be the first order of business.

“Just before the new year, I called about 50 different operators and asked a simple, yet tough question, `What are you going to do for 1998, and what do you see coming for your business and the industry?’” he said. “There was very little response and much uncertainty. It seemed to me that no one knows where they are going, and that each man is out for himself. This may be the way it is, but it is extremely unhealthy during a time when we clearly need vision and leadership.

“What is the tie that binds operators together other than the fact that their associations are political machines? It needs to be more of a social organization, a place to interact with other operators. How can you feel part of something important when people feel like they aren’t supposed to talk to each other?”

LOOKING AHEAD

So where does the leadership necessary to lead operators to the promised land of mutual cooperation come from? And where does this early proponent of a universal video game platform think the Arcade PC initiative will lead?

“The kind of leadership we need will have to come from somebody new,” Brown says flatly.

As for the universal video game platform which he began publicly advocating three years ago, Brown is cautiously optimistic. This current initial phase—of five to seven years—will be dominated by a scramble to control the market, he says.

“Game developers don’t want to form their own distribution and as long as they are willing to follow traditional distribution, the current structures of the industry will control the way manufacturers release games,” he said. “Then, I believe operators will have to accept the revenue-sharing model. It will be an absolute must in the future and will be positive for everyone down the chain.”

That should open up the floodgates for both operators, who will no longer shoulder the burden of hardware and software costs alone, and game developers, who will have a more vested interest in releasing games in a way that make sense economically for the operator.

Brown said he is involved in at least one of the Arcade PC projects, but strictly on a consultation basis. “I am not a wealthy enough individual to accomplish what is required to make it successful,” he said. “A new company of this magnitude sucks up cash faster than a vacuum cleaner sucks up dirt on a carpet. Additionally, forgetting the money for a moment, the amount of time, effort, and energy to make that project successful is beyond my desire and abilities at this time in my life. I am a first-time father at the age of 40, and I don’t want to give up my time to anything else.

“There are times that I really wish I was playing a more active role in it. But, quite frankly, I am a well informed and contributing sideline player, and happy with that. I plan on being directly involved in the future but in an entirely different way than I am now.”

What else might the future hold for Brown? Are the controversies of the past behind him or merely the tip of a Titanic-size critical mass to come? Only time will tell as Worldwide solidifies its place as a distributor on the national and international stages.

“Worldwide Video stands for something, and we’ll fight for it,” Brown concludes the interview. “I’m not afraid to admit my mistakes or admit being totally wrong. I learn from my successes as I have also learned from my failures.”

But then he adds, hinting at a mellower, gentler side: “I’d prefer to learn from other peoples’ failures though.” ▲

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OFF
THE RECORD

We know that operators love to hear what fellow operators have to say on any number of subjects. We asked four operators to tell our readers what they think of the open arcade PC platform being touted throughout the industry. As usual, they could do it anonymously if they preferred.

Cautious but getting prepared

Microsoft was on the bandwagon to get its Windows system out there. Once that happens, they don't care. They aren't writing game programs.

Although I don't think it's likely that this initiative will ever have a major impact on our industry, there is always a possibility and we owe it to ourselves to distinguish between probability and possibility.

There are a bunch of game developers who are designing games for the home Even if they are successful in that area, they aren't necessarily going to be able to be successful in coin-op. Kids will play something all day for free at home that they wouldn't spend 50 cents playing in arcades. The arcade standards are vastly different from home standards. Here's another situation that is similar. Have you ever gone into a grocery store or whatever and they're giving away free food? People are lined up to eat something they wouldn't think of buying to bring home or ordering in a restaurant. Standards change when it's free. Our expectations soar when we're paying for it. Kids are the same way when it comes to playing games for free or spending their hard-earned quarters.

Here's another analogy. People will rent movies that they wouldn't pay to see at a theater. It's because their standards are different. For really good movies, people want that theater experience to get the full impact. For others, waiting until it's out in the video store is OK. And that is something this industry must address: how soon is a game going to show up for the home after it's in the arcade? There's got to be a respectable amount of time to give operators time to recoup their investment. If kids see a pattern of a home version of an arcade piece coming out too soon, it's going to affect collections.

Cruis'n World needs a sit-down game and steering wheel for the full impact of the game. Sure you can play it on Nintendo, but it's no comparison. The industry will have to introduce games that players can experience in the game rooms that are far more effective than at home.

What do you think about the open arcade PC platform that the industry has been talking about for the past two years?

So the question remains: Can these game developers design games for a much higher standard? Can they make something that will appeal enough to entice kids into the game rooms to spend money playing games? The biggest problem is that game standards that make games good in the home are different from those that will ensure a successful game in the arcade.

Even if game developers are able to meet the higher standards, I don't think people realize that this PC platform idea is not going to be cheap. That was Microsoft talking when it was said it would be less expensive.

And once you accept the fact that it's going to be expensive, the point is that operators won't benefit if there are not excellent games.

I've already priced the computers and monitors that will be needed. It will be an investment of several thousand dollars. At this point no one has a game worth doing. I manufacture cabinets and have secured a supplier for the monitors and computers. I'm ready, but know it requires a sizable up-front investment. For street operators that's not good.

Although we read articles about this PC platform, most of the other operators I talk to just aren't thinking about it. It boils down to one thing: If a good game comes along they'll think about it then. The games are way more critical than the platform.

One more comment is that no matter what platform is used by anyone, there will be problems. Nothing, no platform will be free of problems. Remember the first laser disc games? Plagued with problems. No matter what there will be special service needs and problems.

Vicki Sieben, MH Associates, North Dakota

OFF
THE RECORD

What's the point?

I know that some are saying this could be the best thing that ever happened to the industry, but I still don't know exactly what it's all about. At first I understood that the idea was to bring out games that wouldn't cost as much. But the first meeting during AMOA was the last time I heard anything about costing less. In fact, now it seems that I've heard that this plan could cost operators even more money. What's the point then?

I'm not a very big operator compared to some guys, but I make a decent living. I'm one of those who really knows how much work it takes just to keep your head above water, and I'm willing to do what I have to. I pay close attention to new ideas and gimmicks, but I haven't quite figured out which category this falls into.

Microsoft obviously saw some potential in our industry, but I think it was more to make money for itself and much less to do operators any good. What's the deal with Microsoft anyway? It seems like the company is just growing beyond all boundaries. Another operator told me that Microsoft is only interested in selling Windows and our industry might be a good industry to meet that goal. I guess it should be clear to you that I'm real confused about this. I see companies like Dynamo entering the picture and that makes me a little more comfortable because Dynamo has been the operator's friend for many years. I trust them even if I don't quite trust Microsoft.

Midwest Operator

Just want good games

You're probably asking the wrong person about this because I don't know that much about it. At one time I tried to keep up with what was going on, but I'm totally lost. Who's doing what? First I heard that Microsoft was going to get into the industry to bring operators some dynamite games at reasonable prices. We all cheered. Now Microsoft has more or less turned the plan over to Intel, and now the alleged games are looking like they'll cost more than ones out now. I may be wrong, but you know how rumors get started.

I went to AMOA hoping to see some games, but I left with a sense of wondering where I'll benefit from all this technology. Our own industry has been trying to offer operators a networking system with NANI, but it's been years and no end in sight. If our own industry can't get its act together, I don't see exactly how another company or group of them can waltz in and make our lives better. I feel like I've been snookered and used but I don't know exactly how. That's a terrible feeling. I hope I'll know a lot more by the end of this year.

Southern Operator

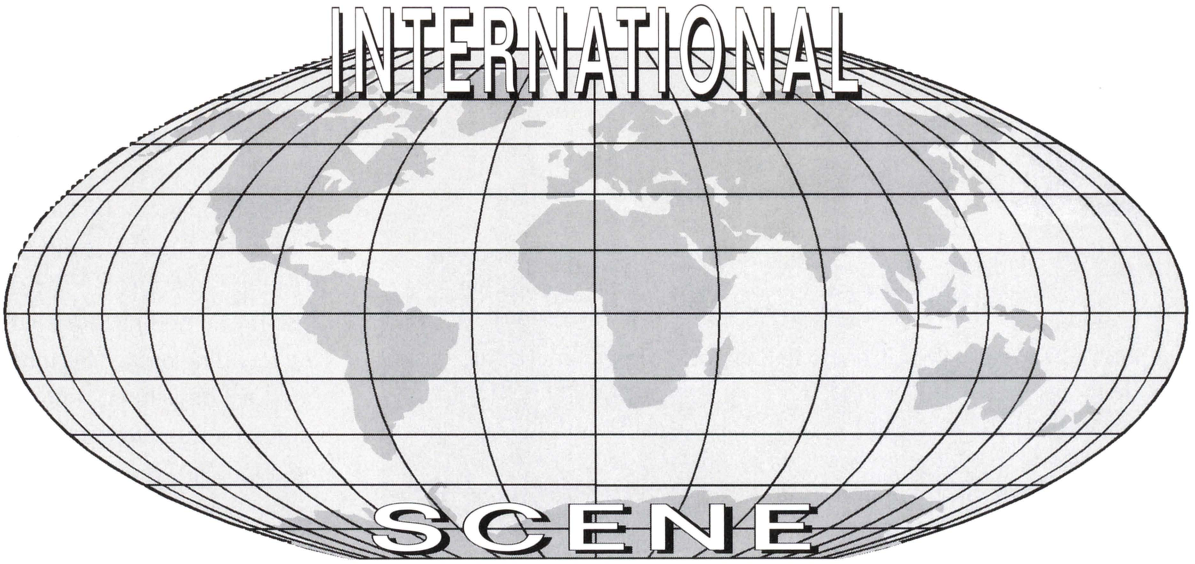
Waiting to see

You have got to be kidding to ask me about the...what did you call it, Arcade PC platform? Why don't you ask me something easy like, what's the meaning of life? Seriously, as an operator I have been waiting patiently for something to happen. I was excited about NANI and was even more excited when I heard that NANI was working with Microsoft. I mean, who wouldn't be impressed with Microsoft looking at your industry? Then NANI and Microsoft seemed to have gone in their own directions, and suddenly Intel is the man of the hour. I am very disappointed in NANI and would say so even on the record. The NANI concept will never fly now because too much time has passed, and there's still no clear direction.

There was a brief effort by Nolan Bushnell with PlayNet that was a pathetic failure from such a revered industry icon. Now every time you open a magazine there is some hype about new PC-based games and some new company with a never-before-tried idea. In the meantime, operators are desperate for new games. I guess I should add that we're desperate for new games that don't cost an arm and a leg. I would not have survived without Neo-Geo so my hopes are high for the new Neo-Geo. Beyond that, I'd say that there's a long way to go. That is if we're going anywhere.

Midwest Operator

INTERNATIONAL SCENE



GTI '97 PROVES SUCCESSFUL

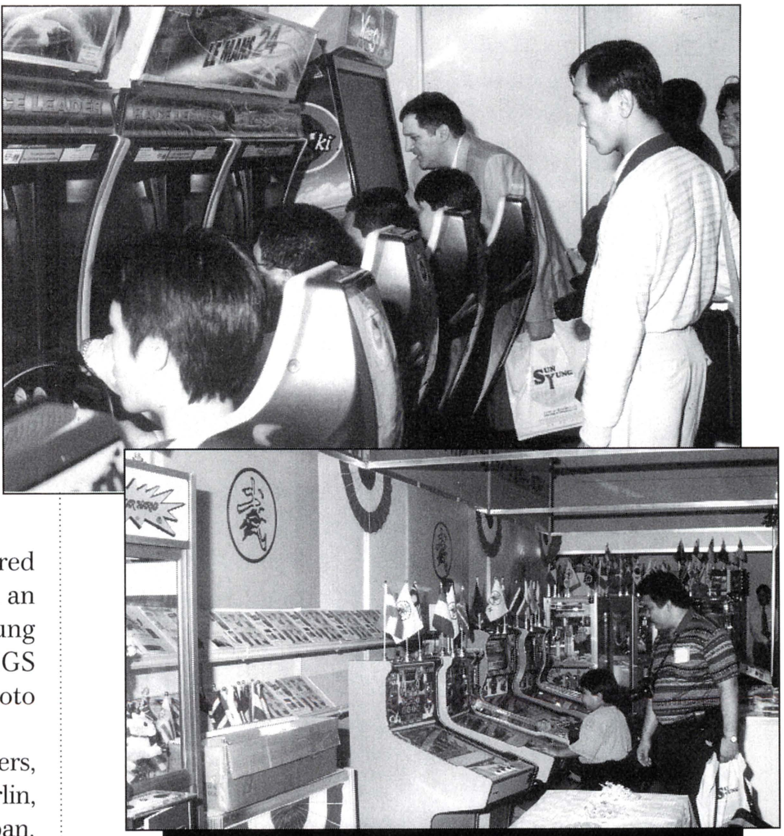
Fifty-five companies occupied 150 booths at GTI Expo '97 last fall, the second year for the new amusement and gaming machine show. Organizers of the event said 6,000 visitors attended during the three-day event in Taichung, Taiwan.

Exhibiting companies came from Taiwan, Japan, Singapore, France, and the United Kingdom. Visitors represented 25 different countries including Bulgaria, Greece, Israel, New Zealand, Poland, the Czech Republic, the Philippines, the Ukraine, Thailand, Korea, England, Austria, France, Singapore, Japan, Brazil, Nepal, and Italy.

A number of new products were displayed: Amuchine Enterprise Co.'s *Sparkling Track* game that required hand-eye coordination, Micro Sova's *Lethal Crystal* in an OK Baby cabinet made by Weche Enterprise, Sun Yung Enterprise Co.'s Big Century cabinets housing the IGS game *The Killing Blades*, and the KIS *Sticker Player* photo sticker machine.

Attendees included operators, suppliers, manufacturers, and executives such as Hans Kloss of Bally Wulff in Berlin, Germany, and Mr. Shohei Morikawa of Sigma Inc. in Japan.

Plans are underway for the third GTI Expo, Aug. 14-17 at the Taipei World Trade Center in Taipei, Taiwan (site of the '96 show). The '98 event will combine all four of the country's existing amusement/gaming trade shows into one, called TAMA-GTI Expo, sponsored jointly by the Taiwan Amusement Machine Association (TAMA) and *Game Time International/Taiwan Slot Magazine*. For more information, call +886-2-2760-7407; fax +886-2-2762-2873; or e-mail (gametime@pts1.seed.net.tw).



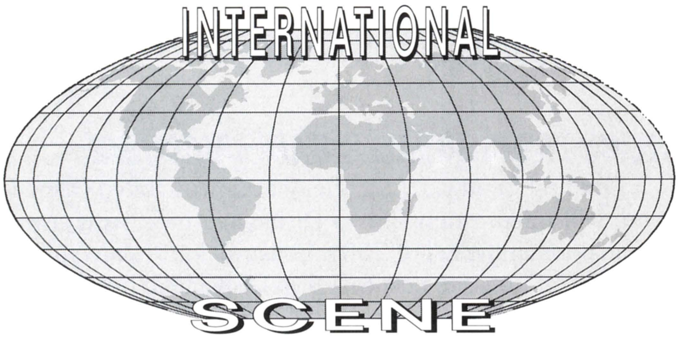
TOP: GTI Expo attendees enjoyed Sega's *Le Mans 24*; **BOTTOM:** A father and son sample games at the GTI Expo.

INDIA EXPO TAPS EMERGING MARKET

Opportunities abound in the Indian marketplace as attendees of the second Annual India Amusement Expo will discover at the show, slated for March 11-12 at the Taj Palace Hotel in New Delhi.

Exhibitors will include Arachnid, Atari, Design Plus, Dynamo Ltd., James Industries, Konami, Lazer-Tron, Galaxy Distributing, Leisure & Allied Industries, Merit Industries, Namco, Pentranic, Rowe International, Sega Enterprises, Skee-Ball, State Sales & Service, Valley, Williams (and Midway Games), and Wurlitzer.

For last minute information, contact W.T. Glasgow Inc., (708)333-9292; fax (708)333-4086.



INTERNATIONAL SCENE

INCREDIBLE TECH. NAMES ELECTROCOIN

Incredible Technologies (IT) has named Electrocoin to be its exclusive game distributor for the United Kingdom. John Stordiges and the Electrocoin staff have been instrumental in establishing the International Tournament System in the United Kingdom where 250 *Golden Tee 3D Golf* games are on line.

PENTON ACQUIRES SHOW ORGANIZERS

The U.S. exhibitions and publishing company Penton Publishing has acquired the shares of Independent Exhibitions, organizers of the United Kingdom's Leisure Industry Week trade event slated for Oct. 6-8 at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham, England.

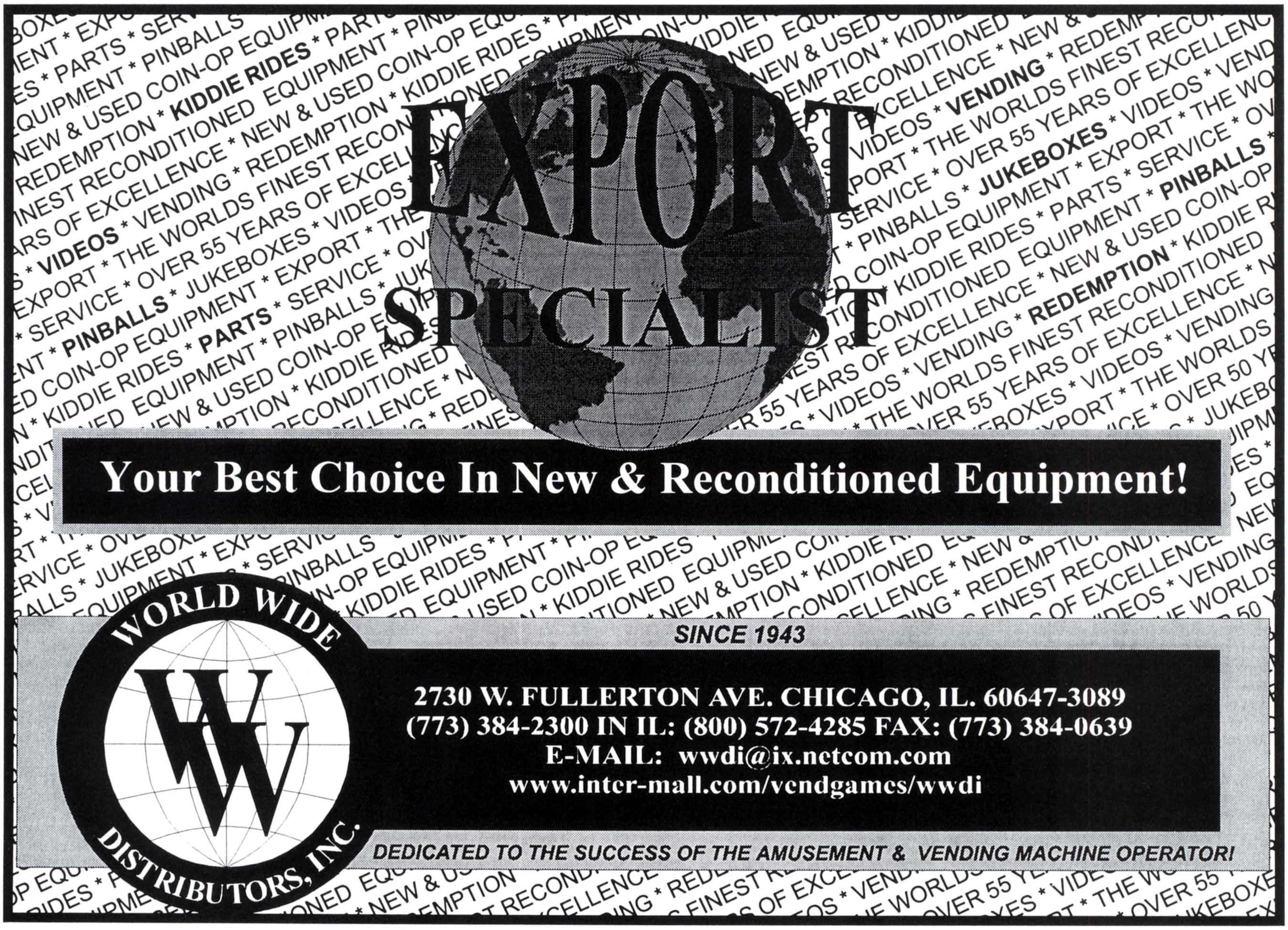
According to Andrew Dedman, managing director of Independent Exhibitions, the deal gives LIW the best of both worlds: "LIW retains its existing management and the freedom to continue its aggressive development, but now has transatlantic back-up and a foothold in the world's biggest leisure market."

Commented Thomas Kemp, chairman and CEO of Penton: "We couldn't help but be impressed by LIW. Our style is very much 'hands-off, investment in' which will suit the LIW team's ambitious growth plans. We'll also provide sales and marketing back-up in the United States where it's needed." For more on the LIW show, contact Angela Snape, show manager, +44 (0) 932-564455; fax +44 (0)932-570860.

THOMSON TO WORK WITH LONDON STUDIOS

Thomson Entertainment will enter a strategic alliance with The London Studios, the resource arm of London Weekend Television and the Granada Media Group, to develop unique simulator ride experiences and attractions. Granada is an original program developer in the United Kingdom and the United States and owns three theme parks in northern England.

Thomson's Paul Bernard, business development and marketing director, said, "We recognize that our strengths lie in developing technology-based entertainment. Granada/LWT's track record in producing award-winning programs speaks for itself. We are extremely excited about developing a number of successful television brands for simulation."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INTERNATIONAL SCENE

INTERNATIONAL CALENDAR

March 11-12
India Amusement Expo. Taj Palace Hotel, New Delhi. Call W.T. Glasgow Inc., (708)333-9292; fax (708)333-4086.

March 12-15
ENADA Spring Show, Rimini, Italy. Call 39-541-71-1711; fax 39-541-78-6686.

March 20-22
Fexpo '98, Montjuic Trade Fair Centre, Barcelona, Spain. Call (34-3)416-1466; fax (34-3)415-0095.

June 16-21
Expo-Diversiones '98, Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. Call (3)614-3015; fax (3)615-1483.

July 27-30
China Amusement Expo, Beijing, PRC. Call (852) 2865-2633; fax (852) 2866-1770.

August 5-6
EXIME, World Trade Center, Mexico City, Mexico. Call W.T. Glasgow Inc., (708)333-9292; fax (708)333-4086.

August 14-17
TAMA-GTI Expo '98, Taipei World Trade Center, Taipei, Taiwan. Call Lauren Swartz, +886-2-2760-7407; fax +886-2-2762-3873.

August 26-28
Asian Amusement Expo, Singapore International Convention and Exhibition Centre, Singapore. Call (703)836-4800, ext. 766; fax (703)836-4801.

FEXPO '98 TO ADDRESS FEC MARKET

Show organizers for Fexpo '98, the family entertainment fair, say the trade event will turn Barcelona, Spain's Montjuic Trade fair Center into the largest FEC in the country for three days, March 20-22. Products and services will be on display for fairgrounds, theme parks, waterparks, children's parks, bowling centers, and restaurants. Attendees will find the latest in vending machines, sports games, kiddie rides, simulators, inflatables, miniature golf needs, and much more. For more information, contact Daniel Sarto, (93)416-14-66 or fax (93)415-00-95.

NEWS FROM JAPAN'S *GAME MACHINE*

- Oriental Land Co. Ltd., the operator of Tokyo Disneyland, will open a new Tokyo DisneySea park with seven theme ports in the fall of 2001. Construction is slated to begin this year on a site next to Tokyo Disneyland overlooking Tokyo Bay. The themed areas will draw on seaside legends and include Mediterranean Harbor, Mysterious Island, Mermaid Lagoon, Arabian Coast, Lost River Delta, Port Discovery, and American Waterfront.
- Chart-topping games in Japan for 1997 were: Kits—*Tekken 3* by Namco (#1), *X-Men vs. Street Fighter* by Capcom (#2), and *Puzzle Bobble 3* by Taito (#3); Dedicated Videos—*Virtua Fighter 3* by Sega (#1), *Virtua On-Cyber Troopers* by Sega (#2), and Go By Train by Taito (#3); Other Arcade Games—*Print Club* by Atlus/Sega (#1), *Neo Print* by SNK (#2), and *Name Card Club* by Sega (#3).
- The Internet Joint Venture plan of Nintendo Co. Ltd., Microsoft Japan, and Nomura Research Institute has been cancelled. The plan would have provided an information service using personal computers and a digital broadcast satellite system.

SALEX NORDESTE HELD IN BRAZIL

Amusement and gaming operators in northern Brazil, who were not able to attend the annual Salex Show in Sao Paulo, had an opportunity to see new games and related equipment at the Salex Nordeste Amusement & Gaming Show held last December in Recife. The event was sponsored by *Games News Magazine* and Worlds Fair Exhibitions.

The show was created for Brazilian suppliers but also was attended by U.S. and European factories and distributors who worked with local companies. The success of this specialized show may lead to the establishment of an annual trade forum for operators in northern Brazil. ▲

At Salex Nordeste, (l-r): Carlos de Lima of Rowe-South America, Marcelo Liochi of Rowe-Brazil, Roberto Flores of Cash Code-JVL, and Aldo Andreu of Andreu International.

The SNK group at Salex Nordeste, (l-r): Mr. Yoshihiko Kato and Mr. Shigeo Aoki of SNK-Brazil; John Barone and Mr. Yoshikazu Jinno of SNK-America.

PC-based games make solid showing at U.K. exhibition

ATEI '98 REPORT

RANDY FROMM

Over at Namco, *Downhill Bikers* and *Time Crisis II* drew attention.

This year's ATEI show was held Jan. 27-29 at London's exhibition hall, Earl's Court. By all accounts (including my own) it was a marvelous event with over 20,000 in attendance from nearly 100 countries around the world. I saw a lot of interesting new PC-based machines there. For the first time in ages I even have a Pick of the Show! You may be surprised what caught my eye.

My first trade show was the ATE show. By that I do not mean my first international trade show, I mean my very first trade show. Before I went to an MOA (now AMOA) show and before the ACME (now ASI) show even existed, the first game show I ever went to in my whole life was the Amusements Trade Exhibition (now ATEI) in January 1976.

I had just started a new job, working for legendary coin-op personality Bob Deith at his distributorship Ruffler and Deith, Ltd. (now Deith Leisure). My job was to establish an electronics repair shop for monitors and logic boards at his London-based office. Before I had a chance to start on that project, I staffed his booth at the show.

It was freezing cold. I was badly jet-lagged from the 12-hour flight over The Pole from Los Angeles, and I had just discovered the fact that the English actually eat baked beans for breakfast. But the show must go on and so we worked hard putting the stand together. When I finally had a chance to take a break and look around me, I saw that practically an entire village had been built in the cavernous Alexandra Palace exhibition hall.

I was impressed with the excitement generated by such a dynamic trade show. Everything in the world of coin-op amusement devices was there to touch and play with. I was in heaven.

Twenty-two years later, I returned to the show. It was freezing cold. I was badly jet-lagged from the 12-hour flight over The Pole from Los Angeles, and the English still eat baked beans for breakfast. However, the ATEI show was every bit the exciting, dynamic world showcase for coin-op that I remembered from before. The show has grown up now, with the village becoming a city of two-story buildings for many of the major exhibitors and more machines than ever before. On top of that, this is truly an international show.

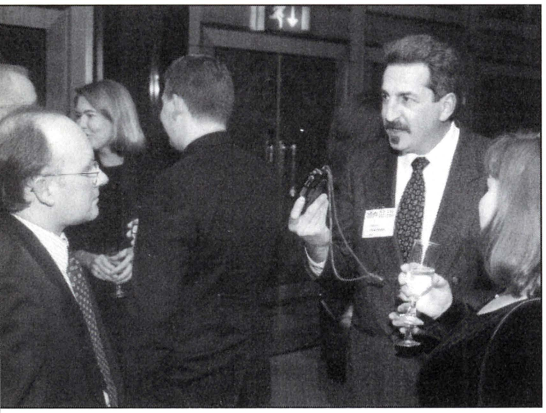
Sega's booth featured *Harley-Davidson & L.A. Riders.*

According to ATE chief executive Peter Rusbridge, the visitor analysis also pays testimony to the geographic spread of represented countries. The largest number of travelers came from Spain, with Germany second, the Netherlands third, Italy fourth, France fifth, and the USA sixth.

As usual, I look at a trade show from a technological point of view. I like to see what's new and interesting. In this case, I was struck by the number of PC-based games. Not only were there simple machines like trivia games and video poker/slots/blackjack but full-blown simulators as well, all running

An overhead view of ATEI shows *Bowlingo* from Mendes and *Hot Flash Hockey* and *Blacklight Pool* from Dynamo, as well as other equipment.

The Konami booth with *GTI Club, Photo Friends, Skier's High,* and *Racing Jam.*



Randy and Lenore Fromm (r) talk to ATEI's Peter Rusbridge at the Off the Record Club dinner for international trade press.

off of Pentium-based PC computers.

There was even a three-monitor, F1 driving simulator running off a Pentium 133! Of course, in this case the computer used three, $1,000 graphics boards to do the job, but it just goes to show what can be accomplished with this universal platform.

Helping to speed along the PC revolution in coin-op games were two big players in the world of 3D graphics accelerator cards for PCs. One was a company called VideoLogic. This United Kingdom-based company manufactures an accelerator known as PowerVR. It was showing a driving simulator game that was truly excellent in both driving and graphics. If you didn't know it was a PC inside, you'd never have guessed it.

The other big name is one you're probably familiar with by now—Quantum3D, which shared a booth with Acclaim Coin-Op. The company showed several new titles, but that's not what impressed me (not that they weren't impressive; they were). I was (and still am) impressed with the way that Quantum3D has led the way in bringing a mature Arcade PC to the market and by recruiting game developers from around the world to join the coin-op family in our quest for new and interesting games.

Quantum 3D showed a variety of new games on Arcade-PC development systems that will allow independent programmers to create the games of the future. In fact, the Arcade-PC and game development will be the subject of next month's "Technical Topics" in Play Meter so I won't get into any more detail here.

Call me wacky but I found my "Pick of the Show" at the SNK stand. SNK showed the prototype of a telephone booth type of vending machine unlike anything you've ever seen. The game is called *Neo Messenger* (or Telephone Buddies or Telephone Friends). Being a prototype, everything was written in Japanese and my Japanese is about as good as my Hungarian; it's all Greek to me!

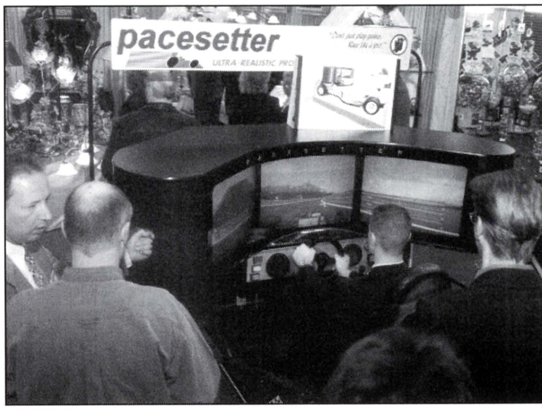
Hantarex, the Italian manufacturer of monitors, showed a full range of products including a 42-inch, wall-mounted flat-display unit that uses Fujitsu's plasma display.

Regardless, following insertion of the money, the machine vends the player's choice of a number of different critters. These are cute little guys like little kitties, raccoons, and space aliens. The player then inserts the critter into the recording slot of the machine and, when prompted, speaks into a telephone handset. The player's speech is electronically recorded onto a microchip in the critter for posterity. You can even add your choice of background music and/or comical sounds. To play back your recording, you simply press a small button on the base of the critter. Wonderful!

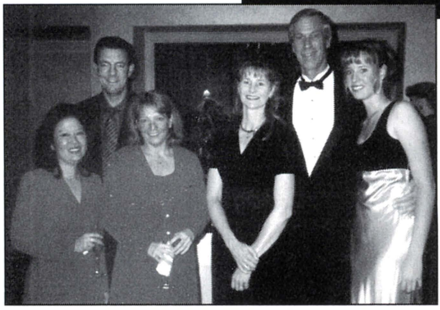
This is really cool. It's a great way to give someone a remembrance of yourself. My wife and I exchanged critters with personal messages in them. When I'm on the road teaching the Arcade School, I can hear her voice anytime I want to, just by pressing the button on the bottom of her little kitty. I'm inside a raccoon! For more information, contact Isaac Baptiste at SNK Europe Ltd., phone 0181-371-9911; fax 0181-371-9890). ▲

Author's Note: I want to thank the ATEI staff for making this show such a wonderful experience, especially Chris Jones and Alex Fierek for all their personal attention.

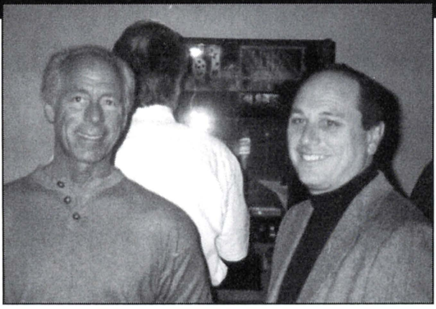
Atop Deith Leisure's two-story booth, Randy Fromm says hello to former "govn'r" Bob Deith with Sega associates Michael Gsedl and Harald Keating.



Can a PC really work in a simulator game? You bet. This three-monitor driving game simulates F1 racing using a single PC as its engine.



From left: Atari's Mary Fujihara, Mike Taylor, Elaine Shirley, and Mr. and Mrs. Dan Van Elderen with their beautiful daughter.



C.A. Robinson's Ira (l) and Sandy Bettelman.

From left: Alice and Don Waters of Mountain Coin, Pam Larsen, Ann Winfield of The Winfield Group, and Kent Larsen of Struve Dist.

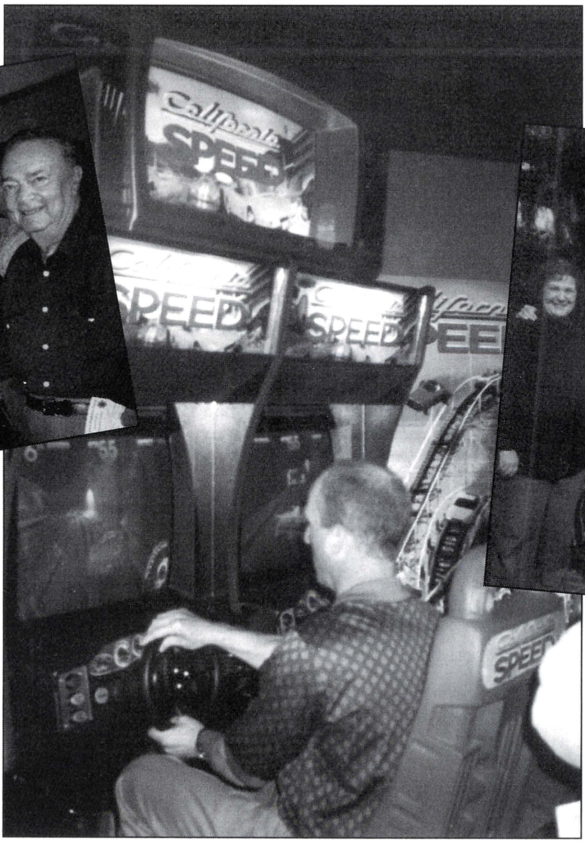
Even El Nino couldn't dampen the reaction to ATARI'S NEW GAMES

A baby seal rain-swept onto the carefully manicured golf course was the first indication that this was not going to be exactly the outdoor activity-packed getaway Atari Games planned for its distributors in early February in Santa Barbara, Calif.! But even a washed out pier, the planned destination for an ambiance-filled dinner, wasn't enough to dampen the spirits of well-traveled industry veterans who knew they'd have a story to tell at the next event!

Golf outings and go-kart rides were replaced by lots of conversation as distributors gathered in the cozy hotel lounge, seemingly a world away from the catastrophic rainstorms spawned by El Nino. Although most of the activities were rained out, distributors knew their trip was not in vain when they were presented with Atari's latest impressive game offerings. They liked what they saw.

Steve Ritchie, well-known for classic, award-winning pinballs like *Star Trek: The Next Generation, High Speed,*

From left: Betson's Bob Boals; Atari's Mike Taylor, Mary Fujihara, and Tom Keil; and Pioneer's Joel Kleiman.



The weather cleared up just long enough for this group to drive to Solvang for lunch.

Atari ladies, (l-r): Elaine Shirley, Jackie Sherman, Mary Fujihara, and Holly La Montagne.

From left: Michael and DeDe Gatens of Southgate Dist., Paula Russell and Connie and David Goudeau of Southland Dist., Carol Lally of *Play Meter* magazine, and John Lotz of Betson West.

From left: Atari's Mark Pierce, Pacific Vend's Sam Feder, Betson's Dave Meyers, and Atari's Mike Taylor and Steve Ritchie.

and *Black Knight 2000,* led a talented team of designers on his first video game, *California Speed.* And speed is definitely the name of the game as players blaze by the scenery at eye-popping velocities, while remaining firmly in control of their cars. There are 14 tracks, a mix of road and closed-circuit courses, 12 cars, automatic or manual transmissions, shortcuts, different game endings, and awesome graphics produced by 3Dfx-powered hardware.

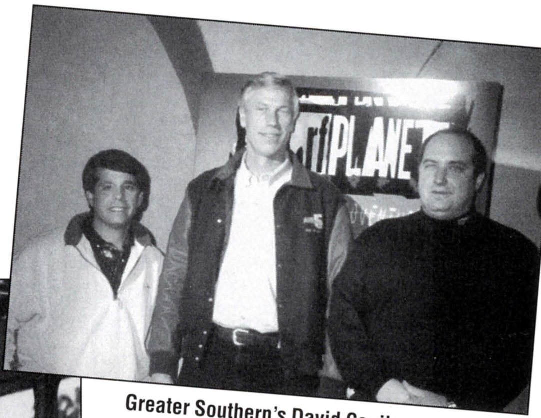
Even with the impressive hardware and software technology, the best feature is perhaps its broad appeal. Atari explained that it was specifically designed so that everybody can have a good time. There are no dramatic crashes; cars flip over and immediately get right back into the race. Canadian Coin's Jim Niblock explained it best: "One thing I liked in particular about *California Speed* is that there is no delay when you crash. I can now compete with my son who is much better than I am. Without the delay you can get right back on the track, making it more competitive. All in all, it is a very good product. The lower price compared to *San Francisco Rush* will help offset the weak Canadian dollar."

Surf Planet, licensed from Spanish company Gaelco, was designed by a development team that included snowboarding maniacs who live and breathe the radical mentality of the vertical slopes. And it shows in the snowboarding action that is as good as it can be without actually getting frostbite on the Alpine slopes. Atari touts it as "adding much needed diversity to street locations and a great investment for small- to medium-sized arcades that don't have a wealth of deluxe sports-style simulators."

Atari also presented the *Area 51/Maximum Force* Duo Kit. Both games are included on one hard drive and is available as a universal kit to convert any JAMMA-compatible cabinet. *Area 51*, one of the greatest shooting games of all time, and *Maximum Force,* built on the player-friendly *Area 51* game engine, are both precision-based two-player shooting games. *Area 51* offers 24 minutes of game play scattered over six segments while *Maximum Force* has nearly 30 minutes of game play across three missions. "This kit gives you the opportunity to take chances with a proven pair of serious earners," Atari predicts for operators. ▲

Atari's Derrryl DePriest (r) chats with Moss Dist.'s Nancy Hardt and her husband Brad Janssen.

A slightly waterlogged group heading for a tour of Santa Barbara, only proving that coin machine folks can have fun no matter what the weather!

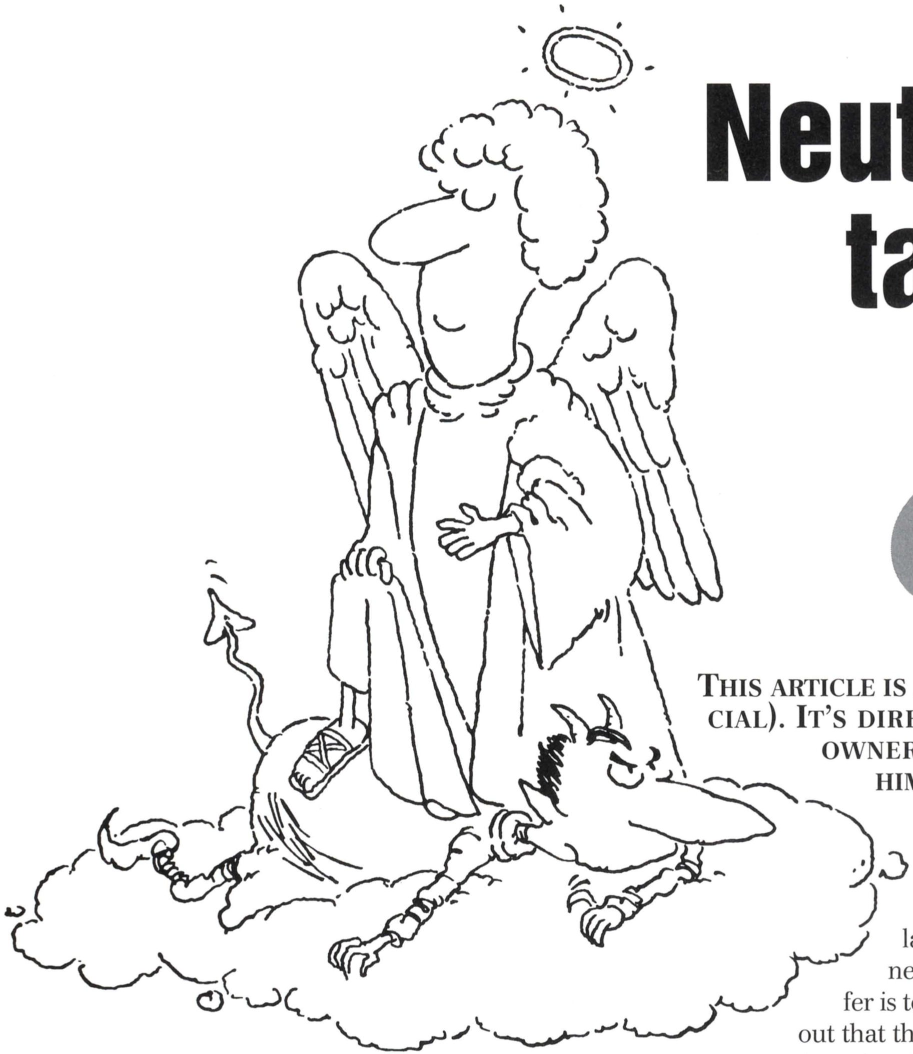


Greater Southern's David Capilouto with Atari's Dan Van Elderen and Mark Pierce.

Neutralize the tax devil

&

Looking at incorporating



THIS ARTICLE IS ACTUALLY A SERMON (AND A COMMERCIAL). IT'S DIRECTED AT THE TYPICAL READER (THE OWNER OF A FAMILY BUSINESS; LET'S CALL HIM JOE) WHO WORKED HIS BUNS OFF TO ACCUMULATE SOME WEALTH. NOW JOE FINDS OUT THAT HIS UNWELCOME REAL PARTNER IS THE IRS.

Joe knows that sooner (during his life) or later (at his death), he must transfer his business and his other wealth. Normally, the transfer is to his family. The shock comes when Joe finds out that the highest bracket of the gift/estate tax is 55 percent. Imagine, the IRS has become the major partner, while Joe's family is entitled to only a 45 percent share. This first tax tragedy is clearly the work of the tax devil.

So Joe goes to the professional market—typically a lawyer, accountant, insurance consultant or banker—to get help in minimizing the tax devil's economic havoc. Surprise! Almost every member of this marketplace is singularly focused on what he does in the estate planning (really death planning) process. The huge body of knowledge necessary to effectively deal with Joe's wealth transfer problems has caused an inefficient marketplace.

We have never met anyone, your column authors included, who even claims to know it all. Yet, the professional advisors in this marketplace just plain don't share their clients. Even the thought of sharing a client (and the resulting fees) is discouraged by the other partners in the firm. This is the second tax tragedy.

There are many wonderful and knowledgeable practitioners in the estate planning area in this country. They are not the problem. The problem is a combination of the (1) complexity of the law, (2) the requirement to have extensive knowledge of wills and trusts, multiple areas of the tax law, economics, insurance, the client's business, and often other areas of knowledge; and (3) most of all, the inability or unwillingness of the professional to share an estate planning client with other professionals who have the knowledge he does not have.

What is Joe to do? A second opinion is usually the answer. But where should Joe go?..To another practitioner who doesn't share clients? We have struggled with Joe's problem for years. We tried expanding our body of knowledge: our own and the office as a whole. Helpful. But no cigar. We were still a long way from knowing everything we should know to service Joe's wealth transfer and estate planning needs.

One day the lights went on. Why not a Wealth-Transfer Network? A network of tax planners, business appraisers, lawyers, insurance consultants, and others needed to help Joe in every aspect of his wealth transfer problems. After a number of years, we have in fact put together the Wealth-Transfer Network. It has two simple functions: (1) To help Joe put together a wealth transfer plan and an estate plan; or (2) if Joe already has completed his plan, give him a second opinion.

Interestingly enough, the second opinion function is the most popular. When should you get a second opinion? Two reasons: one, you are just plain uncomfortable with your current plan, or two, your entire wealth is not being transferred—intact—to your family (the IRS is still going to get a share of your wealth pie). It is rare, very rare, that our network cannot create a plan to pass all your wealth (every dollar of it) to your family. Simply put, we have figured out how to neutralize the estate tax devil.

Should you incorporate?

To incorporate or not to incorporate? That is the question asked by most new business owners. From a tax viewpoint, there are two kinds of corporations—a regular corporation or an S corporation. Let's identify the single biggest difference between the two: A regular corporation pays tax on its profits, while an S corporation does not pay tax and is similar to a partnership, passing its profits or losses through to its stockholders.

Suppose you are about to start or have, in fact, started a new business. Dealing only with anticipated bottom-line results, even if everything goes well, what is the usual course of events?...losses precede the welcome arrival of profits. Whether the new business is your only business or one of many, this article spells out the tax-wise standard operating procedure for most new business starts. By the way, the concepts that follow apply to any business, whether new or in business for decades.

While the venture is producing red ink results, the most important tax consideration is to get the maximum tax benefit out of the losses being produced. Either a sole proprietorship, partnership, or S corporation can be used with equal effectiveness to funnel the losses to you. These losses can be used to reduce your other income. If you want to limit your personal liability, an S corporation is probably your best choice. (A limited liability company, in rare circumstances, might be selected.)

Finally, the painful incubation period ends; your fledgling business is turning a profit. Although there are some rare exceptions, profits mean doing business as a corporation. It's not only easy to incorporate, but you can incorporate a going business tax free.

If you want to divide the profits with members of your family, an S corporation is your answer. However, in most cases, operating your profitable business as a regular corporation usually produces the best overall tax results. Why? The answer lies in the low corporate tax rates for earnings under $100,000. For example, a regular corporation only pays $7,500 on its first $50,000 (only 15 percent) of profit. Imagine, if you are in a 40 percent personal tax bracket, the same $50,000 in profit would cost you $20,000 in taxes. Some difference! If you are operating a profitable business, pencil out your potential savings with your accountant.

Once you begin to make significant profits (over $160,000), are thinking of selling your business, or have an estate tax problem, you must revisit your corporate (C or S) choice. ▲

Want to learn how to start saving taxes from the minute you start your new business? Send for these special reports: "A New Tax Super Star...S Corporation;" "Starting a Business—102 Tax-Saving Ideas to Make You Rich;" or "A Tax Road Map for Home Business Operators."

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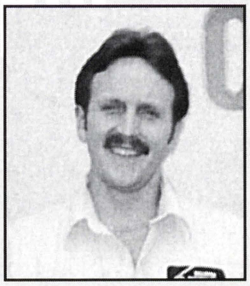
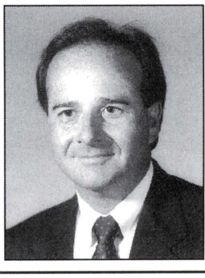


IRVING BLACKMAN

Irving Blackman and Brian Whitlock are CPAs with Blackman, Kallick, Bartelstein LLP in Chicago. Also lawyers, they specialize in business succession and wealth transfer. Both are sought-after speakers. Want to consult? Need a second opinion? Contact them at (312)207-1040; fax (312)207-1066. Their special reports are available at a nominal fee.



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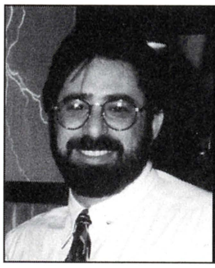
STARTING A REDEMPTION OPERATION



Michael Getlan is a third generation owner/operator of arcades and family entertainment centers and a member of IAAPA's Education, Technology, and Award Committees. He is director of operations for Amusement Consultants Ltd. of New Rochelle, N.Y., which operates 40 locations in 12 U.S. states and Central America, and is a frequent speaker at industry conventions.

Many factors contribute to a successful redemption operation—proper equipment choice, correct percentages, coherent merchandise purchasing and handling, great display, and fantastic guest service.

But at the start of the operation, the most important step is to choose the correct mix of redemption equipment, making sure that the factors of length of play, variable payouts, and mix of game type are balanced with respect to the clientele.

Additional variables such as merchandise purchasing, prize counters, and display will be covered in the future.

EQUIPMENT CHOICES

Operators can choose from several different types of redemption equipment in creating a redemption operation. These include the familiar alley games such as *Skee-Ball*, tossing games, whacking games, pushers, roll downs, token action games, sports games, video redemption pieces, shooting games, and assorted novelty games. This is a large selection and can be confusing to those who are not familiar with the equipment.

The largest selections are available in the token action and sports game categories. Token action games are those games where the coin itself is used to create game play by tossing, rolling, or shooting the coin into the game arena. These games have high earnings and give a high payout in tickets, but be careful not to load up on this type of game as guests can spend their money quickly (and not have much fun).

Most sports style games are those in which the player plays a sport such as basketball (the most common type of sports game), football, or baseball. These games are great, as everyone has some idea of how to play, and they can create a real spirit of competitiveness among guests.

As always, clientele should be the determining factor in equipment choices. A high percentage of children will call for more kiddie games, whacking games, and novelty games. A high percentage of students (high school or college) will call for more sports games. Older guests tend to favor roll downs (not necessarily for the game play, but often for the seats that come with such games).

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Most of the other classes of games have a wide appeal that transcends age groups. And many types of games, such as token action games or pushers, have styles of game play that are so standardized that different titles are simply themed differently. A good operation has a mix of all types.

VARIABLE PAYOUTS AND ENTERTAINMENT VALUE

Prize merchandise drives a redemption operation. And tickets drive the redemption of merchandise. For maximum success, the machines must dispense tickets in proportion to the score that the player achieves.

Some states have legislation that requires all equipment to dispense the same amount of tickets. In other states, however, ticket payout should reflect the relative time of play and entertainment value received in relation to the other pieces of equipment offered at the facility.

To simplify, games that are really fun to play, or that take a considerable time to complete, should pay out less tickets than other games which may not be as much fun or have a shorter average play time.

This balancing of payout is more an art than a science; the payouts should change over time as equipment changes, and as players get better at playing the games. Remember that redemption equipment rewards the player for playing well, and over time players will get better at the games they enjoy. Balancing payouts is an ongoing process that needs constant supervision.

Check payout percentages on a weekly basis. Have all tickets logged into each machine, and calculate the individual ticket payout of each machine by comparing cash or token income to tickets dispensed. Much of the information needed is available from the individual machine metering systems. Log and chart the payouts for comparison over time.

TYPE OF OPERATION

The type of operation and clientele will dictate a facility's operating mode. Tourists require a much lower payout than a local audience. Tourists generally do not have time to comparison shop for redemption value.

Local guests, however, look for value and are more likely to go to a competitor if they fell that they can win more tickets there. Ticket payouts can vary from 18 percent to as much as 35 percent between these kinds of operations.

Whatever your operation, maintain your equipment in top shape to satisfy every guest. Modify your game room composition in terms of type of equipment and ticket payout over time, and give your operation a fresh look and feel for continued success. ▲

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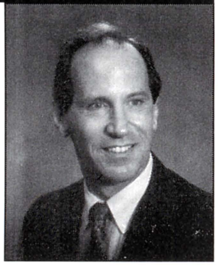

CHARTING RESTRICTIONS ON REDEMPTION REFORM

In last month's column, I suggested that anyone considering a change in the law to create a more predictable and benign environment for the operation of redemption amusement review the applicable state's constitution and not ask the legislature to pass a reform bill which would violate any constitutional prohibition of lotteries or gambling.

Since last month, I have checked the constitutions of all of the states and prepared a chart of state constitutional prohibitions related to lotteries and gambling that accompanies these remarks. (My research is pending in the case of a few states.)

The differences among the states are as follows: In some of them, there is no constitutional prohibition of gambling or lotteries. Any prohibition now "on the books" is solely an act of the legislature. In these states, if the legislature were to create an exception for amusement redemption games that involved no skill in play or that involved just a little skill but less skill than a predominance, then the exception would not violate the state's constitution.

In other states, there is a constitutional prohibition of "lotteries" only and not of any other form of gambling or games of chance. In no case is the term lottery defined in the state's constitution itself. In some of these states, the courts have decided in a few cases whether the prohibition extends only to pursuits that involve only chance and no skill whatsoever, or whether the prohibition extends further to apply to all pursuits in which chance predominates, despite the involvement also of at least some skill. In these states, there are three possible assessments:

1. The prohibition extends only to all-chance pursuits. A reform for amusement redemption which did not require the involvement of at least a little skill would probably violate the state's constitution, but a reform which required at least some skill would probably be OK.

2. The state's courts have held that "lottery" means all games in which chance predominates. In these states, any exception to the general prohibition for games with prizes but less than a predominance of skill would probably be held to violate the state's constitution.

3. The state's courts have not addressed the issue or have done so in an inconsistent or contradictory manner. Here, there can be no assurance that the skill involvement standard would be constitutional.

In a final grouping of states, the constitutional prohibition goes beyond lotteries and includes all gambling and games of chance. In these states there would clearly be no hope for the "mere skill involvement" standard without a constitutional amendment.

In preparing this chart, I have, of course, focused on the general prohibition and have ignored existing exceptions to the prohibition for the state-operated lottery, charitable bingo, licensed casinos, and other forms of specifically-regulated gaming. ▲

Tom Fricke is a St. Louis-based attorney who specializes in legal issues relating to the amusement game business. He serves as chairman of the IAFEC government relations committee and can be reached at (314)361-6672.

LOTTERY AND GAMBLING PROHIBITION IN STATE CONSTITUTIONS

State	Scope of Constitutional Prohibition	Most permissive constitutional standard, likely per court interpretations
Alabama	*Lotteries Only*	Mere Skill Involvement
Alaska	*No Constitutional Prohibition*	
Arizona	*No Constitutional Prohibition*	
Arkansas	*Lotteries Only*	Mere Skill Involvement
California	*Lotteries Only*	Skill Predominance
Colorado	*Lotteries Only*	Mere Skill Involvement
Connecticut	*No Constitutional Prohibition*	
Delaware	*All Gambling*	Skill Predominance
Florida	*Research Pending*	
Georgia	*All Gambling*	Research Pending
Hawaii	*No Constitutional Prohibition*	
Idaho	*Lotteries Only*	Research Pending
Illinois	*No Constitutional Prohibition*	
Indiana	*No Constitutional Prohibition*	

Chart continued on next page

Continued from previous page

State	Scope of Constitutional Prohibition	Most permissive constitutional standard, likely per court interpretations
Iowa	*No Constitutional Prohibition*	
Kansas	*Research Pending*	
Kentucky	*Lotteries Only*	Mere Skill Involvement
Louisiana	*All Gambling*	Research Pending
Maine	*No Constitutional Prohibition*	
Maryland	*No Constitutional Prohibition*	
Massachusetts	*No Constitutional Prohibition*	
Michigan	*No Constitutional Prohibition*	
Minnesota	*No Constitutional Prohibition*	
Mississippi	*No Constitutional Prohibition*	
Missouri	*Lotteries Only*	Mere Skill Involvement
Montana	*No Constitutional Prohibition*	
Nebraska	*Lotteries Only*	Skill Predominance
Nevada	*Lotteries Only*	Skill Predominance
New Hampshire	*Research Pending*	
New Jersey	*All Gambling*	Skill Predominance
New Mexico	*Research Pending*	
New York	*All Gambling*	Skill Predominance
North Carolina	*No Constitutional Prohibition*	
North Dakota	*All Gambling*	Skill Predominance
Ohio	*Lotteries Only*	Mere Skill Involvement
Oklahoma	*No Constitutional Prohibition*	
Oregon	*Lotteries and Casinos*	Can't Assess: Jurisprudence Inadequate
Pennsylvania	*No Constitutional Prohibition*	
Rhode Island	*Lotteries Only*	Skill Predominance
South Carolina	*Lotteries Only*	Skill Predominance
South Dakota	*Research Pending*	
Tennessee	*Lotteries Only*	Skill Predominance
Texas	*Research Pending*	
Utah	*All Gambling*	Skill Predominance
Virginia	*No Constitutional Prohibition*	
Washington	*Lotteries Only*	Moot: The state has regulated amusement redemption
West Virginia	*Lotteries Only*	Mere Skill Involvement
Wisconsin	*All Gambling*	Skill Predominance
Wyoming	*No Constitutional Prohibition*	

GUEST
COMMENTARY

Distributor shares unique vantage point

Distributors deal with both operators and manufacturers. Their role is all about relationships and trust. Here's one distributor's point of view on a number of topics. He wants to remain anonymous.

MUSIC

Somehow music continues to be the backbone of the industry. From the coin-op standpoint the idea is to create the optimum environment to showcase the music. Downloaded music may be the answer for some. It's not for every location, but there are opportunities in certain parts of operators' routes.

Ask anyone. The dynamics of the coin-op amusement industry are changing and the business is getting a lot tougher. A seasoned music and games salesman explains why.

The reality is that most locations want a jukebox, but they also want to have karaoke on Thursday, a DJ on Friday, and a band on Saturday.

STAFFING

Distributors and operators have the same problem of being understaffed. On the distributing side, once you figure out who the buyers and movers and shakers are and what they need, you spend so much time with these folks that you don't have much time left over. Operators who demand your time get it.

COMPETITION

I don't know about other cities, but where I live there are two big grocery stores right across the street from each other. There's something about one of the stores that makes you choose it over the other. Our business is like that, that's why relationships are so important.

THE NEW GENERATION

The industry is full of family businesses. The new generation is well educated and understands computers where their fathers were never involved with computers. All the operators of days gone by knew was what they had in their pockets. Now their children pull up records from the computer to see how types of games and individual titles are doing.

Then they say: "You sold me this other game and I haven't paid for it yet. Why should I buy the new one?" Older operators may have been caught up in the hype and said, "Send me two!" The new generation does more analysis. They are afraid of making mistakes because too many were made in the past.

GAME PRICES

People are angry about game prices. That's because everywhere else we look we see advances in technology leading to lower prices, not higher prices. Televisions get bigger, computers get more sophisticated, and the prices keep coming down.

Just look at game prices: $5,500 for a dedicated game, $3,000 for the kit! Of course operators are cautious. I can't tell you how many customers said if it had not been for countertops and *Golden Tee 3D Golf* they don't know where any money would have come from. The factory priced that golf game reasonably; the distributors put a modest amount on top and sold plenty. Why haven't other manufacturers seen the benefit of this path? I don't know.

EASY DOES IT

Operators have only so much money. They buy what they know is good. Remember the old term "filler game." Nobody uses that term any more. There are no fillers—all the old equipment out there are the fillers. There are no new, low-priced games. The only thing that sells is the top shelf.

A lot of operators wait and see and don't jump on everything new that comes out. The wait-and-see attitude can work against operators as well. Sometimes they want more of a game and then the run is over and they are out of luck.

CONSOLIDATION, GOOD OR BAD?

We've seen an overall reduction in the operator population and location numbers. This consolidation means less product sold. The amount of equipment going out the door is less. When someone sells out, that is one less person to sell to.

Will we sell more to the larger company that bought him out? Maybe, maybe not. Every operator has A, B, and C level accounts. The big company looks at the small company's best stops in a different way; they are no longer considered A accounts.

LOCATIONS AND GAME DEMAND

There is a frustration permeating the industry right now. There are locations and players that would like to play our games but operators are not putting the games in. Operators are the gatekeepers; they have the ultimate power. They can say, "I'm not going to buy that game."

The number of locations is decreasing. There are fewer mom and pop restaurants and bars. They are closing and in their place are Applebee's and other similar businesses that are not coin-op locations.

DISTRIBUTOR ROLE

Distributors sell everything. When an operator asks us about a specific game we'll say, in all honesty, "That's an OK game, but if you're getting just one you may want to get this other game instead."

Distributors and operators are like business partners. Operators value our judgment. When we go the extra mile every single time it makes a difference. I've found that you don't have to be twice as good as the next guy—just a little better.

With customers I create an environment where when a new game comes out, if I recommend it the operator has some trust. When I recommend something that doesn't work for him I lose the privilege of being his consultant. We can't just move it, move it, move it (product). You can ruin your credibility with customers.

Manufacturers have come and gone, but operators and distributors remain. ▲

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3. Daily Security Report.

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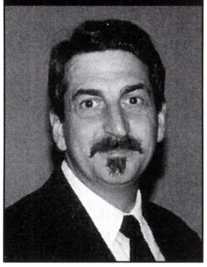
For additional information, contact Virgil Vance, Van Brook of Lexington, Phone 1-800-553-3134 or (606) 231-7100, or Fax (606) 231-7108.

TECHNICAL TOPICS

RANDY FROMM



Don't let the smoke out: testing horizontal output stages without applying POWER

A Play Meter Monthly Exclusive

It happened again last week. I was holding an Arcade School at Brady Distributing in Charlotte, N.C. It was a great school. We had 40 people in the class including one student from Trinidad! It was Friday, and we were in the middle of our hands-on monitor lab. For the lab, students were asked to bring all of their old broken monitors from their shops for repair.

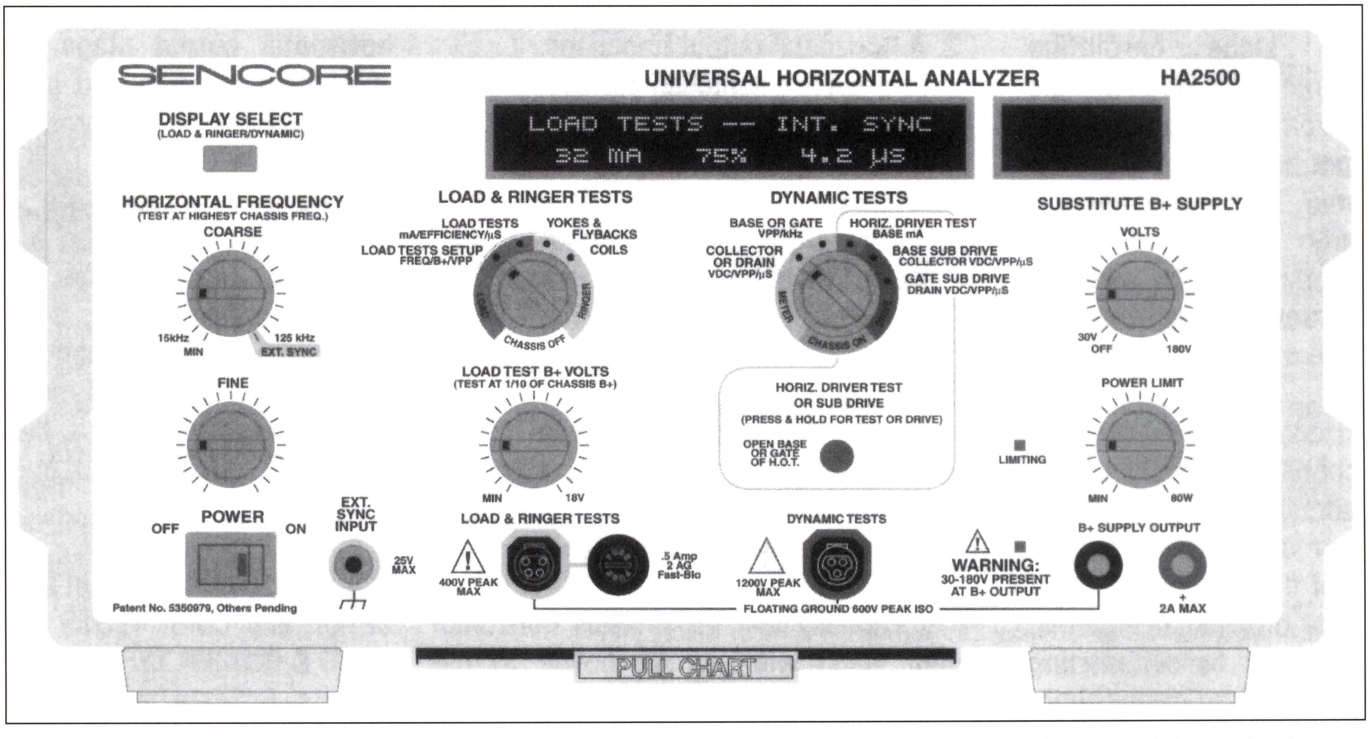
We had the usual types of failures: lots of bad capacitors, an unfortunate number of bad CRTs, and numerous blown horizontal output transistors. It's a good thing I carry of bunch of 2SD870 and 2SD1398 transistors with me when I go on the road. Between these two, I can replace just about any horizontal output transistor in any monitor.

But time and time again, the horizontal output transistor that had just been replaced would blow again as soon as we fired up the monitor. Of course, I'm mostly talking about flyback failure here. In almost every case, the flyback was bad, causing the HORIZONTAL OUTPUT TRANSISTOR to fail. Most of the time, it's just a good educated guess. Since the flyback is the most likely cause, you just go ahead and replace it (and the HORIZONTAL OUTPUT TRANSISTOR AGAIN) and the fuse and fire up the monitor again and everything works fine.

But a couple of the monitors were real dogs. They were here at the monitor lab because nobody that looked at them had been able to repair them. As soon as these monitors were powered up, they blew the HORIZONTAL OUTPUT TRANSISTOR. Nothing could be found with an ohmmeter, and a replacement flyback was purchased and installed to no avail. There was nothing shorted that we could tell. Eventually, we found a capacitor that tested OK with the meter but was breaking down as soon as power was applied. But the repair took a long time and we had purchased a flyback we didn't need just on speculation. That's a poor way to troubleshoot, but it's a method we're forced to use when we don't have the right test equipment.

The really cool and professional way to troubleshoot those pesky (and common) horizontal deflection failures is to operate the horizontal output stage at a reduced rate. Then you can take some measurements that will measure the circuit's performance (efficiency) as an indicator of how the circuit is working WITHOUT blowing itself up in the process!

As we have discussed in the past here in *Play Meter* magazine, many of these difficult symptoms could be iso-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RINGER
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MIN
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Fig. 1: The Load Tests of the Sencore HA2500 Universal Horizontal Analyzer test horizontal output stages with no AC power applied to the chassis.

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Randy Fromm's Arcade School 1944 Falmouth Dr. El Cajon, CA 92020-2827 TEL 619.593.6131 FAX 619.593.6132 lated using a variable AC power supply to reduce the AC voltage to the chassis. Reducing the AC voltage lowered the B+ voltage to the horizontal output stage permitting conventional measurements. However, the B+ voltage output from a switching mode power supply cannot be reduced when the AC voltage is lowered. Therefore, a variable AC power supply is ineffective in troubleshooting horizontal, B+ supply, startup, and shutdown symptoms in the chassis with a switch mode power supply.

Last month, we looked at Sencore's HA2500 and how the variable B+ power supply can be used where the VARIAC could not. Here's another approach you can use with the same piece of test equipment. The HA2500's Horizontal Output Load Test provides a functional test to quickly confirm if the horizontal output stage is free of severe defects or if problems exist. It quickly determines if the horizontal output stage is the cause of problem symptoms. The Load Test is useful in troubleshooting defects in the horizontal output stage. It protects replacement parts by verifying when horizontal output stage problems have been corrected and it is safe to apply AC voltage without having to worry about letting the smoke out of the parts.

THE LOAD TEST

The Load Test simulates the operation of the horizontal output stage at its normal operating frequency and 1/10 its normal B+ voltage. The test energizes the horizontal output stage producing alternating currents in the flyback and/or yoke just as if the chassis was operating. Measurements taken during the simulation are displayed to indicate the conditions of the chassis horizontal output stage. To simulate the actual operation of a horizontal output stage without power to the chassis requires three things:

1. A B+ or DC voltage applied to the chassis horizontal output transformer.
2. A horizontal output transistor to provide a switched current path to energize the output transformer or coil.
3. A drive signal to this horizontal output transistor at the proper frequency and duty cycle to switch it on and off properly.

The HA2500 provides all three of these. For a better understanding, refer to the Load Test block diagram and horizontal output stage in Fig. 2.

To functionally test the chassis horizontal output stage with no AC power to the chassis requires that the B+ voltage to the horizontal output stage be supplied. A variable DC power supply O - 18 volts provides the voltage for the Load Tests. The DC power supply is adjustable with the front panel LOAD TEST B+ VOLTS control. The positive voltage is output to the orange clip of the LOAD & RINGER TESTS lead in respect to the black clip or ground. The power supply current is limited to 250 mA to provide short circuit protection.

A MOSFET transistor serves as the chassis horizontal output transistor providing the switching action to energize the chassis horizontal output stage. The HA2500's internal horizontal frequency generator provides the proper horizontal drive signal to the gate of the transistor. The drive frequency is adjusted with the front panel COARSE and FINE controls to match the frequency of the chassis horizontal output stage. Drive may also be decoded from an external sync signal applied to the HA2500's Ext. Sync Input Jack.

During the Load Test, if the chassis horizontal output stage is operational, alternating currents and induced voltages or flyback pulses are produced. Since the Load Test B+ voltage is 1/10 of normal, the current and voltages are approximately 1/10 of normal, providing a low level and safer test. However, the LC or resonant timing of the chassis horizontal output stage is the same no matter what the level of applied voltage. This means the flyback voltage pulse duration is nearly the same during the Load Test as it is during chassis operation.

CONNECTING THE LOAD & RINGER TEST LEAD

Performing the LOAD TEST requires connecting the three colored clips of the supplied LOAD & RINGER TEST LEAD to the chassis horizontal output stage. Before connecting the LOAD & RINGER TEST LEAD clips, be sure to unplug or remove AC pow-

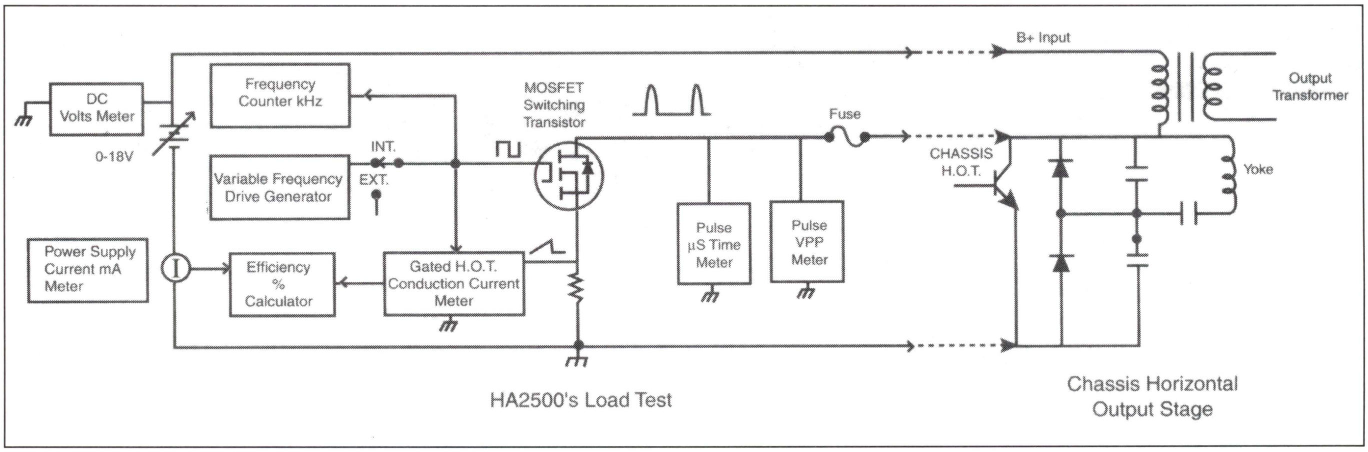


Fig. 2: Block diagram of the Load Test and connections to a horizontal output stage.

er to the chassis being tested. The HA2500 contains internal protection circuitry, but to remove any chance of damage to the analyzer and chassis, always unplug the chassis AC line cord before connecting the test lead clips.

CAUTION: Only perform the LOAD TEST with AC power to the chassis removed.

Connect the black test lead clip to horizontal ground commonly available at the emitter or source lead of the horizontal output transistor. Connect the orange test lead clip to the B+ voltage input to the horizontal output stage transformer primary or coil winding. Connect the yellow test lead clip to the collector or drain of the horizontal output transistor.

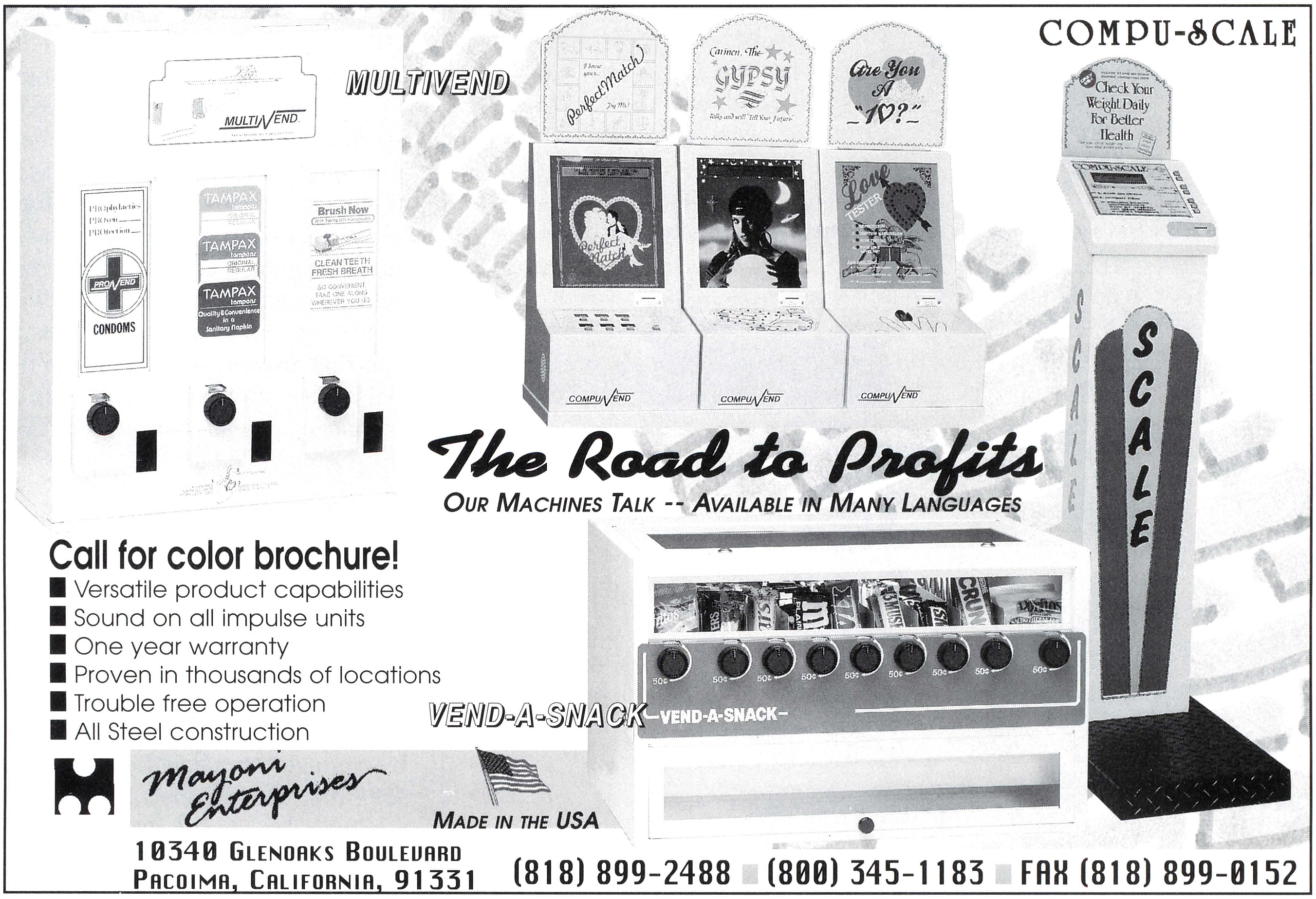
The Load Tests can be performed with or without the chassis horizontal output transistor in the circuit. If the transistor is leaky or shorted, the Load Test Setup may display a "LIMITING" message or indicate a severe output stage problem. If you suspect a shorted horizontal output transistor, remove it from the chassis and repeat the Load Tests Setup.

CONNECTING THE LOAD & RINGER TEST LEAD CLIPS WITHOUT A SCHEMATIC

We had schematic diagrams for almost everything we had worked on during the hands-on monitor lab. Each Arcade School student receives a copy of the Big Blue Book of Really Great Technical Information, which has full-sized, fold-out schematic diagrams for just about everything you're likely to encounter. However (and as usual) there were a few oddball monitors including weird Taiwanese and Japanese monitors that I've seen before but never have owned a schematic.

To connect the LOAD TEST LEAD clips without the aid of a schematic diagram, first locate the horizontal output transistor. The horizontal output transistor is located near the flyback transformer or yoke connector plug on the circuit board. Most horizontal output transistors are variations of a TO-3P or TO-218 package and are mounted to a large metal heat sink. The circuit path of the collector or drain should lead to a pin of the flyback or yoke transformer or coil. If you are unsure if the transistor is a horizontal output type, use a semiconductor cross reference book to match the transistor number and identify a replacement transistor. Check the uses specified for the replacement transistor and the breakdown voltage rating BVce. Most horizontal output bipolar transistors have a rating greater than 1000 volts (typically 1500 V) and MOSFET transistors greater than 800 volts (typically 1000 V). Usually, this is the largest transistor nearest to the flyback.

Once you have identified the horizontal output transistor, connect the yellow test lead clip to the center lead (collector or drain). Identify the ground



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for the horizontal output circuitry. Horizontal ground typically connects to the emitter or source lead of the horizontal output transistor directly or through a parasitic inductor or small value resistor. In some instances the emitter connects through several windings of the driver transformer to ground. The ground circuit path on the board typically has a large trace size. It may also be recognized as the trace on the circuit board that the negative leads of many polarized capacitors share.

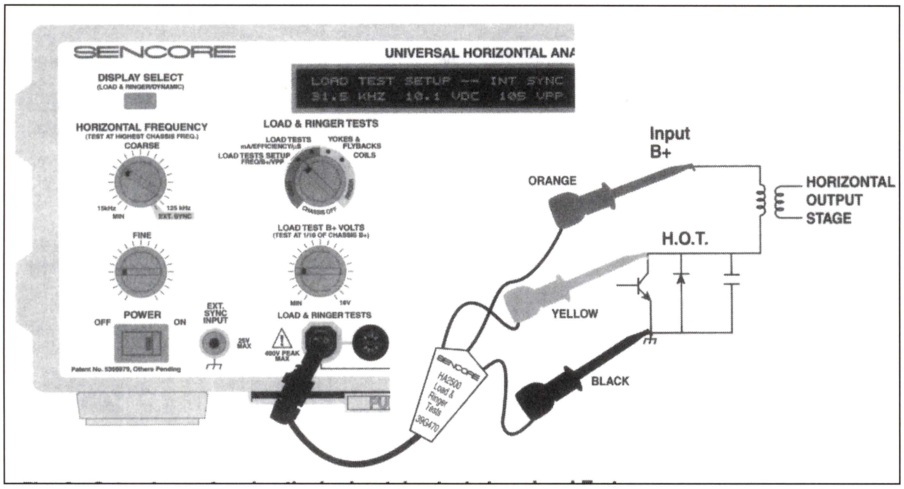
SENCORE
UNIVERSAL HORIZONTAL ANA
DISPLAY SELECT (LOAD & RINGER/DYNAMIC)
LOAD TEST SETUP -- INT SYNC
31.5 KHZ 10.1 VDC 105 VPP
HORIZONTAL FREQUENCY (TEST AT HIGHEST CHASSIS FREQ.)
COARSE
15kHz MIN
125 kHz EXT. SYNC
FINE
LOAD & RINGER TESTS
LOAD TESTS mA/EFFICIENCY/µS
YOKES & FLYBACKS
COILS
LOAD TESTS SETUP FREQ/B+/VPP
CHASSIS OFF
LOAD TEST B+ VOLTS (TEST AT 1/10 OF CHASSIS B+)
MIN
18V
POWER
OFF
ON
EXT. SYNC INPUT
25V MAX
400V PEAK MAX
Patent No. 5350979, Others Pending
Input B+
ORANGE
HORIZONTAL OUTPUT STAGE
H.O.T.
YELLOW
BLACK
SENCORE HA2500 Load & Ringer Tests

Fig. 3: Setup for performing the horizontal output stage Load Tests.

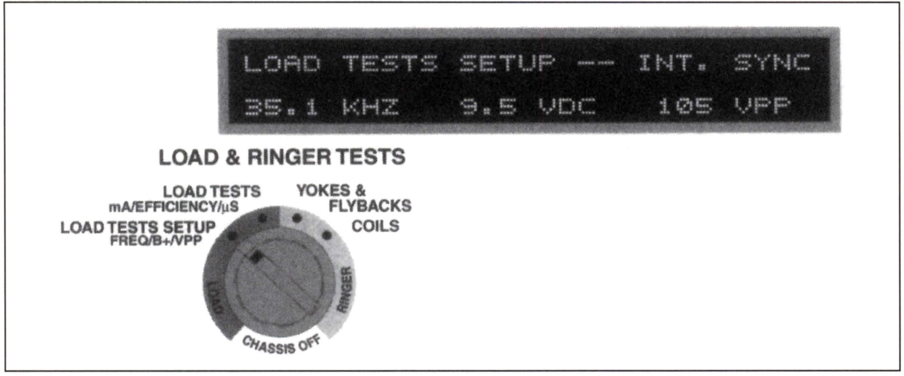
LOAD TESTS SETUP -- INT. SYNC
35.1 KHZ 9.5 VDC 105 VPP
LOAD & RINGER TESTS
LOAD TESTS mA/EFFICIENCY/µS
YOKES & FLYBACKS
COILS
LOAD TESTS SETUP FREQ/B+/VPP
LOAD
RINGER
CHASSIS OFF

Fig. 4: Use the Load Tests Setup to set the frequency and B+ for an accurate Load Test.

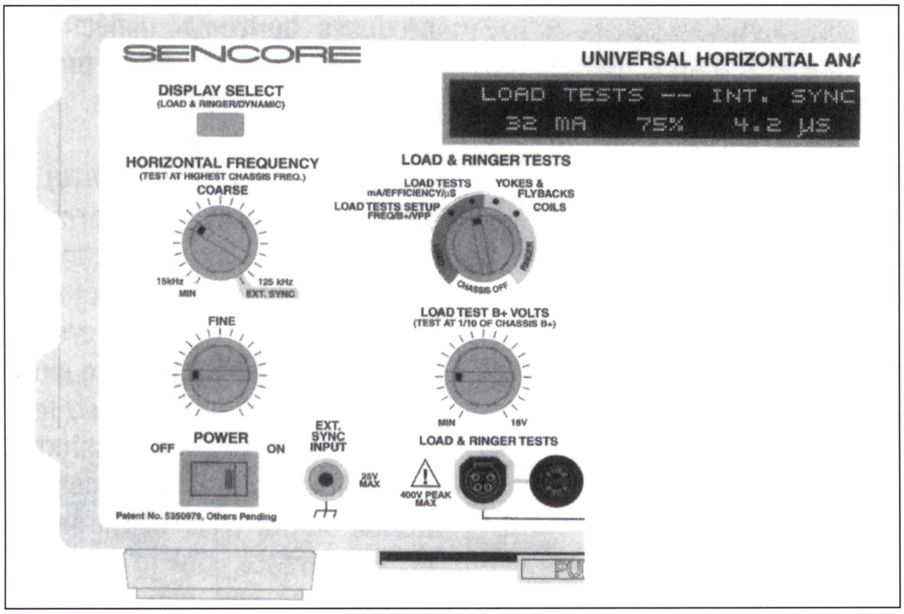
SENCORE
UNIVERSAL HORIZONTAL ANA
DISPLAY SELECT (LOAD & RINGER/DYNAMIC)
LOAD TESTS -- INT. SYNC
32 mA 75% 4.2 µS
HORIZONTAL FREQUENCY (TEST AT HIGHEST CHASSIS FREQ.)
COARSE
15kHz MIN
125 kHz EXT. SYNC
FINE
LOAD & RINGER TESTS
LOAD TESTS mA/EFFICIENCY/µS
YOKES & FLYBACKS
COILS
LOAD TESTS SETUP FREQ/B+/VPP
CHASSIS OFF
LOAD TEST B+ VOLTS (TEST AT 1/10 OF CHASSIS B+)
MIN
18V
POWER
OFF
ON
EXT. SYNC INPUT
25V MAX
LOAD & RINGER TESTS
400V PEAK MAX
Patent No. 5350979, Others Pending

Fig. 5: The Load Tests indicate if the horizontal output stage contains a defect.

To identify the B+ voltage input point to the horizontal output stage, traces the circuit path from the collector or drain of the horizontal output transistor to the output transformer or coil. This is one side of the primary winding of the output transformer or coil in the horizontal output stage. With an ohmmeter, identify the pin or pins that have continuity to the collector pin of the transformer. Typically, one or two pins may be identified on a flyback transformer. The B+ input pin may be identified on the circuit board for you. If not, the B+ input typically has an electrolytic capacitor to ground with a coil or low value resistor leading to the B+ power supply or regulator. A second transformer pin that may have shown continuity to the primary winding likely has a diode connected to it as it is commonly used as a 200 to 300 volt power supply to the CRT.

If you are unsure of the B+ input, you can use a trial and error method to identify the B+ input using the Load Test Setup. Alternately connect the B+ or orange test clips to pins of the transformer that may be the B+ input while monitoring the Load Tests Setup readouts. The connection that produces Load Tests Setup and Load Tests results that are normal or closest to normal is likely the proper input. Improper connections will show unusual Load Tests Setup and Load Tests results.

UNDERSTANDING THE LOAD TEST SETUP

The Load Tests Setup guides you in setting the horizontal frequency and B+ volts for the Load Test and confirms proper chassis connections. An improper horizontal frequency and/or B+ voltage can cause Load Tests results that are outside of the typical range for a particular chassis. Perform the Load Tests Setup before analyzing the Load Tests mA, %, and uS readouts. If you change the horizontal test frequency or B+ volts while performing the Load Tests, repeat the Load Test Setup. During the Load Tests Setup, three parameters are simultaneously metered and displayed in the center fluorescent display. They include the following.

1. Load Test Horizontal Frequency (kHz)—Variable with the HORIZONTAL FREQUENCY COARSE and FINE controls.

2. Load Test B+ voltage (DCV)—Variable with the LOAD TEST B+ VOLTS control.

3. Peak-to-Peak (PPV)—Amplitude of induced voltages in the chassis horizontal output stage resulting from an active LOAD TEST at the frequency and B+ selected.

These three parameters guide you to the proper setup for performing the Load Tests at the chassis 1/10 level and achieving the most accurate test results. The frequency readout indicates the horizontal frequency for the Load Tests selected with the HORIZONTAL FREQUENCY COARSE and FINE Controls. When the COARSE control is set to "EXT", the test frequency is determined by the frequency of the applied sync to the EXT.

SYNC INPUT JACK.

The DCV readout indicates the HA2500's Load Test B+ power supply voltage applied to the horizontal output stage. The voltage is adjustable with the LOAD TEST B+ VOLTS Control. Adjust the LOAD TEST B+ VOLTS Control until the display indicates a DC voltage that is approximately 1/10 of the normal B+ voltage to the horizontal output stage being tested.

To setup for the LOAD TESTS:

1. Remove AC power to the chassis.

2. Reduce the LOAD TEST B+ voltage to "MIN."

3. Connect the LOAD & RINGER TEST LEAD clips to the proper circuit points.

4. Set the LOAD & RINGER TESTS—Switch to "LOAD TESTS SETUP."

5. Set the HORIZONTAL FREQUENCY COARSE and FINE Controls to the horizontal operating frequency. For multi-frequency monitors, select the highest horizontal operating frequency.

6. Increase the LOAD TEST B+ VOLTS control to approximately 1/10 of the normal B+ voltage to the chassis horizontal output stage.

7. Read the VPP readout in the digital display.

The LOAD TESTS SETUP VPP (Volts Peak-to-Peak) readout indicates the amplitude (voltage) of the induced voltage pulses produced by the horizontal output stage being energized by the Load Test. If properly connected, a functional horizontal output stage produces induced voltage pulses relative in amplitude to the selected test frequency and applied B+ voltage. In horizontal output stages using bipolar transistors, VPP readings typically range from 80 to 120 VPP.

To achieve the most accurate Load Tests of multi-frequency monitors such as Wells-Gardner's U5000, set the horizontal frequency to match the highest horizontal frequency the display can produce. In the case of the U5000, that's 25 kHz. While a precise frequency is not important, avoid being more than 10 kHz below the monitor's highest frequency. Low test frequencies increase the mA readings often above the typical normal range because mode switched components are removed from the horizontal output stage.

If you are unsure of the chassis normal B+ voltage, increase the LOAD TEST B+ VOLTS Control while moni-

Load Tests	Setup Readouts		
Frequency (kHz)	VDC	VPP	Most Likely Causes
Display's Highest Horiz. Freq.	1/10 normal B+ (Highest Display Freq.)	90 -110VPP (Bipolar type)	Proper Load Test Setup
	Can't increase DCV	0.0 VPP Low VPP	Load Test mA ≅ 250 mA "Current Limiting" Severe B+ Load.
Display's Highest Horiz. Freq.	1/10 normal B+	0.0 VPP	Improper connections Open inductor/flyback circuit path.
Display's Highest Horiz. Freq.	1/10 normal B+	Low VPP	Load Test B+ too low. Load Test Freq. too high.
Display's Highest Horiz. Freq.	1/10 normal B+	High VPP	Load Test B+ too high. Load Test Freq. too low.

Chart 1: Likely causes of Load Test Setup Readouts.

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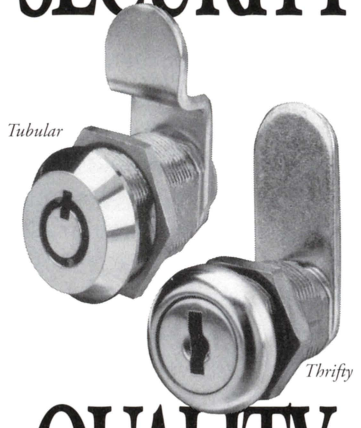

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Load Test	Display Readout	Description of Test
B+ Current	milliamps (mA)	The current supplied by the Load Test B+ power supply to the horizontal output stage under test.
Efficiency	percent (%)	The % of the current input to the horizontal output stage at the beginning of the horizontal cycle that is returned to the power supply at the end of the cycle.
Pulse Time	microseconds (µS)	The duration of the induced voltage pulse produced by the horizontal output stage.

Chart 2: Description of the three measurements performed during the LOAD TEST.

toring the VPP readout. Increase the voltage until the VPP readout is near 110. This establishes a satisfactory 1/10 level for Load testing most horizontal output stages.

A 0.0 VPP readout during setup with a normal VDC applied indicates no inductive voltage pulses are being produced by the horizontal output stage. This may be caused by an improper connection or open in the horizontal output stage. Low VPP readouts may be caused by lower than normal B+ volts, a higher than normal horizontal test frequency, or an output stage loading or timing defect. Higher than normal VPP readouts indicate higher than normal B+ volts, a lower than normal horizontal test frequency, or a timing problem in the horizontal output stage.

Severe horizontal output stage problems may prevent normal Load Test Setup. This does not prohibit you from using the Load Tests. Set the Load Tests Setup as close to normal VPP as you can and perform the Load Tests. Use the Load Test readouts to help determine the nature of the horizontal output stage defect or setup problem. (See Chart 1.)

PERFORMING THE LOAD TESTS

In the LOAD TESTS position of the LOAD & RINGER TESTS Switch, the HA2500 simultaneously meters and displays three automatic measurements. The measurements accurately reflect the operation of the horizontal output stage being tested and indicate if the horizontal output stage is normal or contains a defect. The three LOAD TEST measurements are summarized in Chart 2.

The "mA" readout indicates the current being drawn by the horizontal output stage from the Load Test's B+ power supply. This current reflects the current drawn by the horizontal output stage from the chassis B+ power supply. In other words, this is the power supply load current to the horizontal output stage. Since the Load Test B+ supply is approximately 1/10 of chassis normal B+ voltage, the "mA" readout is approximately 1/10 of the chassis normal. Readings typically range from 10 to 70 ma in normal operating horizontal output stages and rise significantly when severe loading problems exist in the horizontal output stage.

The Efficiency "%" readout measures what percentage of the input energy or current to the output stage is returned back to the B+ power supply at the end of the horizontal cycle. Horizontal output stages are primarily tuned LC circuits with energy alternating between the magnetic fields of the flyback and/or yoke and capacitance of the output stage. At the end of the horizontal cycle, the magnetic fields collapse returning stored energy back to the power supply. Defects add power losses greatly reducing the efficiency of the horizontal output stage and % of energy returned to the power supply. Efficiency % readouts typically range from 55 to 90% in normal horizontal output stages and decrease dramatically in problem horizontal output stages.

The "uS" readout is an automatic measurement of the pulse duration or time of the inductive voltage produced in the horizontal output stage being tested. The Load Test measures the time of the pulse from the start of its rising edge to the end of its falling edge. The pulse duration or time is determined by the inductance or capacitance of the flyback or coil primary, retrace timing capacitor(s), yoke, and yoke series components. The "uS" readout provides an indication of the LC timing of the horizontal output stage. The timing influences the flyback pulse amplitude which determines the amount of yoke deflection and CRT high voltage.

Author's note: As this is being written, I am headed out to the ATEI show in London, England, to introduce Quantum3D's fabulous new Arcade PC system to the world. Wait until you see this thing. I am convinced that the Arcade PC has a big part in the future of coin-op. As you read this, I am preparing to do the same at the ASI show in Las Vegas, Nevada, March 26-28 For information about the show, contact call W.T. Glasgow Inc., (708)333-9292; fax (708)333-4086.

That's all for now. See you at the Arcade School in Las Vegas. ▲

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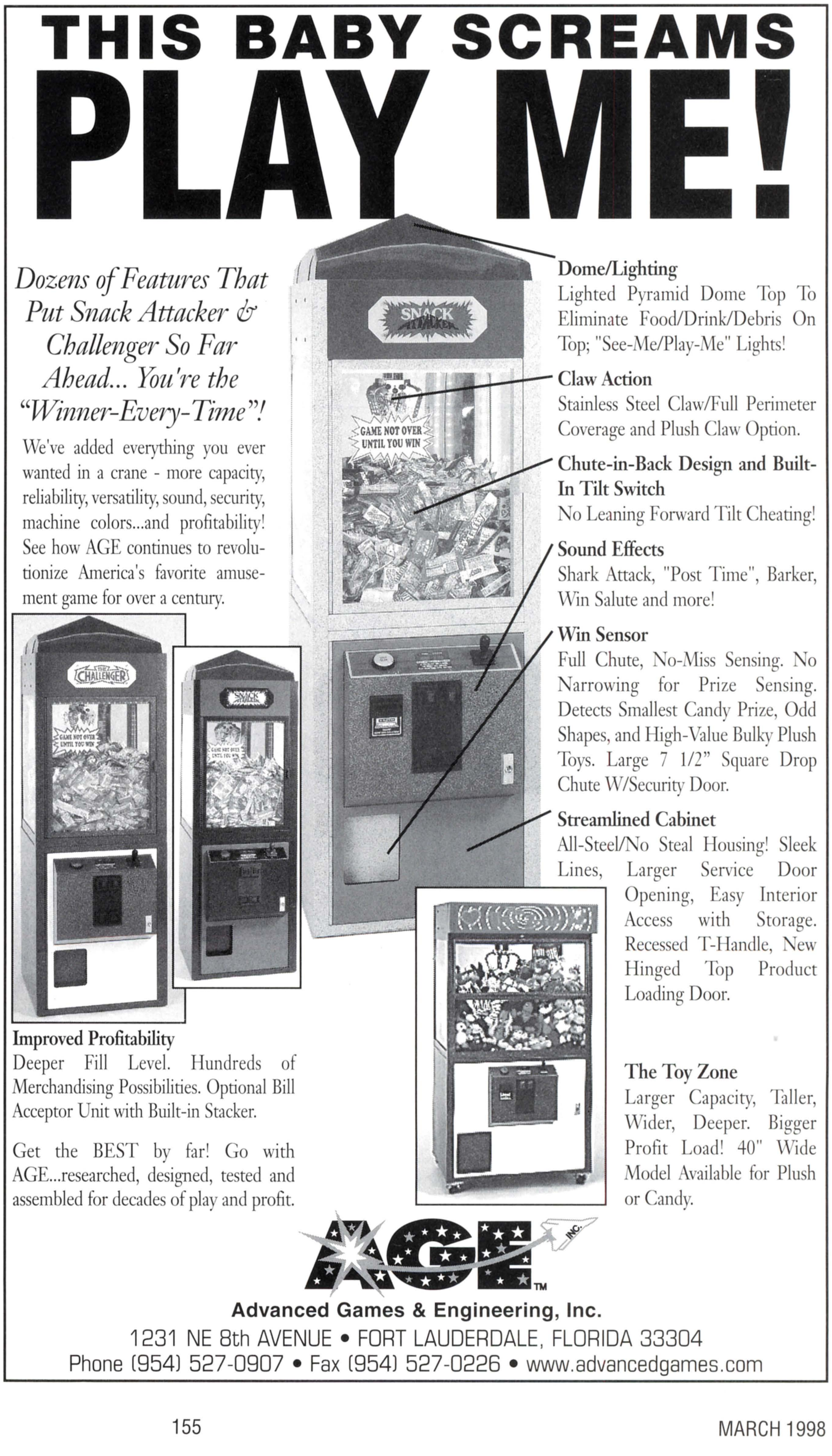
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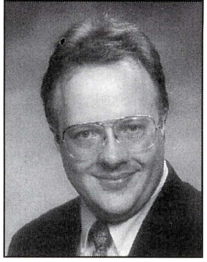
TICKET TECH



"TICKET VIC" FORTENBACH

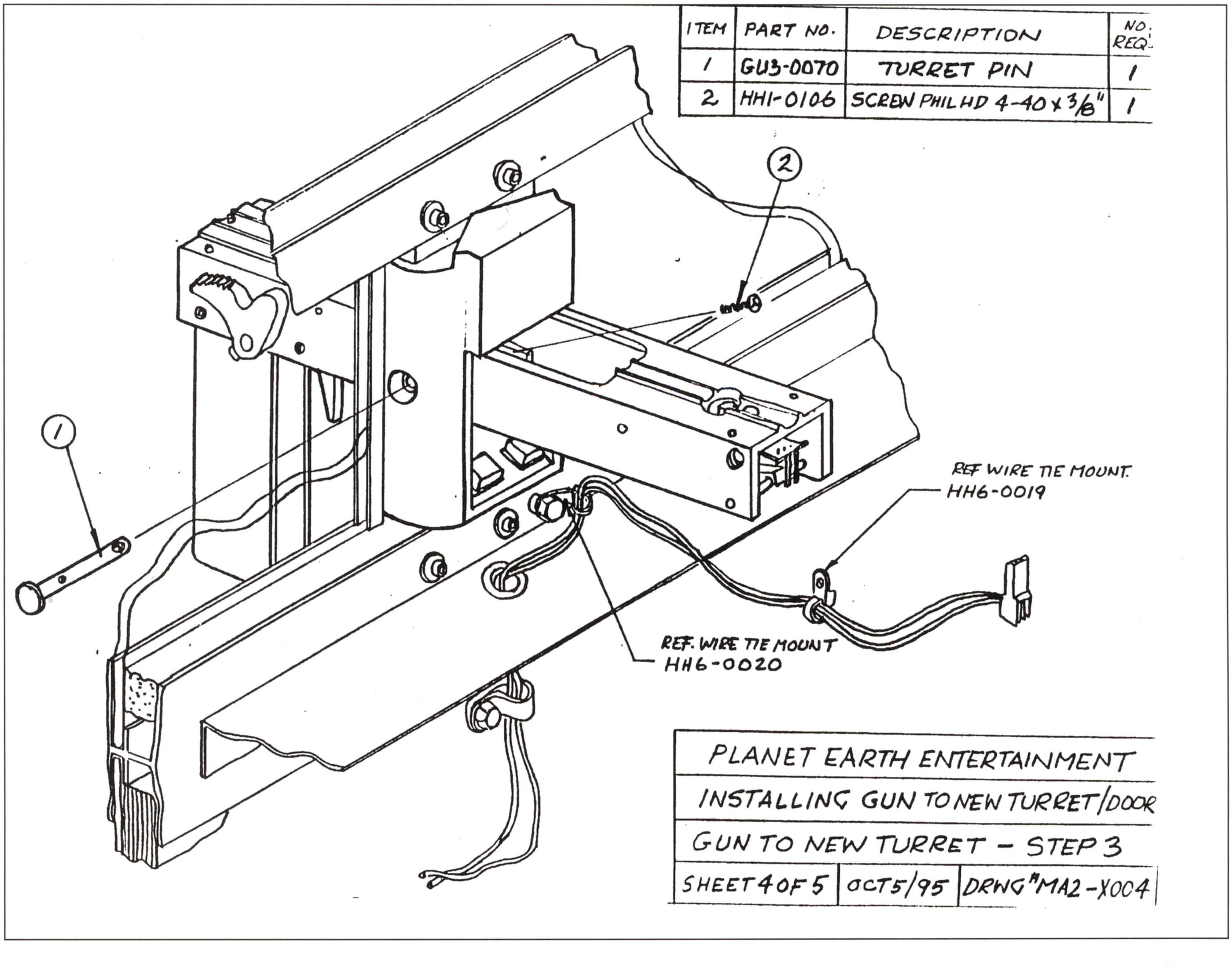
PLANET EARTH PRIMER

Planet Earth, recently renamed Planet Earth Sales, is a redemption game manufacturer located in Southern California. The company's games include *Dinoscore, Dinowin, Treasure Falls, Grand Treasure Falls, Jumbo Treasure Falls, Surfin' Safari*, and *Pirates Revenge* (in a large and a mini version). *Surfin' Safari* and *Pirate's Revenge* were manufactured by a new division of Planet Earth called 5 Star Redemption.

All of the games mentioned above (except *Pirates Revenge*) incorporate a coin gun. The player can insert up to eight coins and rapid-fire them at various targets. The coin shooter is very simple and failures are minimal. The gun itself is housed in an assembly called a turret. The turret pivots left and right while the gun pivots on a center shaft up and down, allowing the player to aim at any target within the game.

There are two versions of the turret and gun, the first used on the early production runs of *Dinoscore*. To determine which gun you have, check the coin slide (the part of the gun that the coin slides down). The older gun is about two inches shorter and screwed into the turret with two hex-head screws on the left and right sides. The new coin gun assembly is longer and a turret pin is used to hold the gun instead of the hex-head screws. This turret pin is held in place by a single mini screw which makes it easy to remove the gun from the turret by simply removing the mini screw.

Planet Earth has an exchange program in place if your coin gun needs



ITEM	PART NO.	DESCRIPTION	NO. REQ.
1	GU3-0070	TURRET PIN	1
2	HH1-0106	SCREW PHIL HD 4-40 x 3/8"	1

an overhaul. I'd suggest you take advantage of this since the coin gun gets used so much.

There is a problem that I'd like to address. The wires that connect the sensor on the tip of the gun through a three-pin mini plug tend to come off due to the left, right, up, and down action of the gun. To fix this problem put a dab of silicon to hold the plug to the sensor connector.

The ticket dispenser used on all of the games is a Deltronic Labs DL 4-SS, a one pulse/one ticket dispenser. The game's logic board sends out a single pulse and one ticket is vended to the player. There is an on/off switch on the ticket bin that stops the pulses from the logic board going to the ticket dispenser when it's in the off position. This switch is mounted where it can get hit when filling the ticket bin. If your game is not dispensing tickets after you just filled the bin, check that switch.

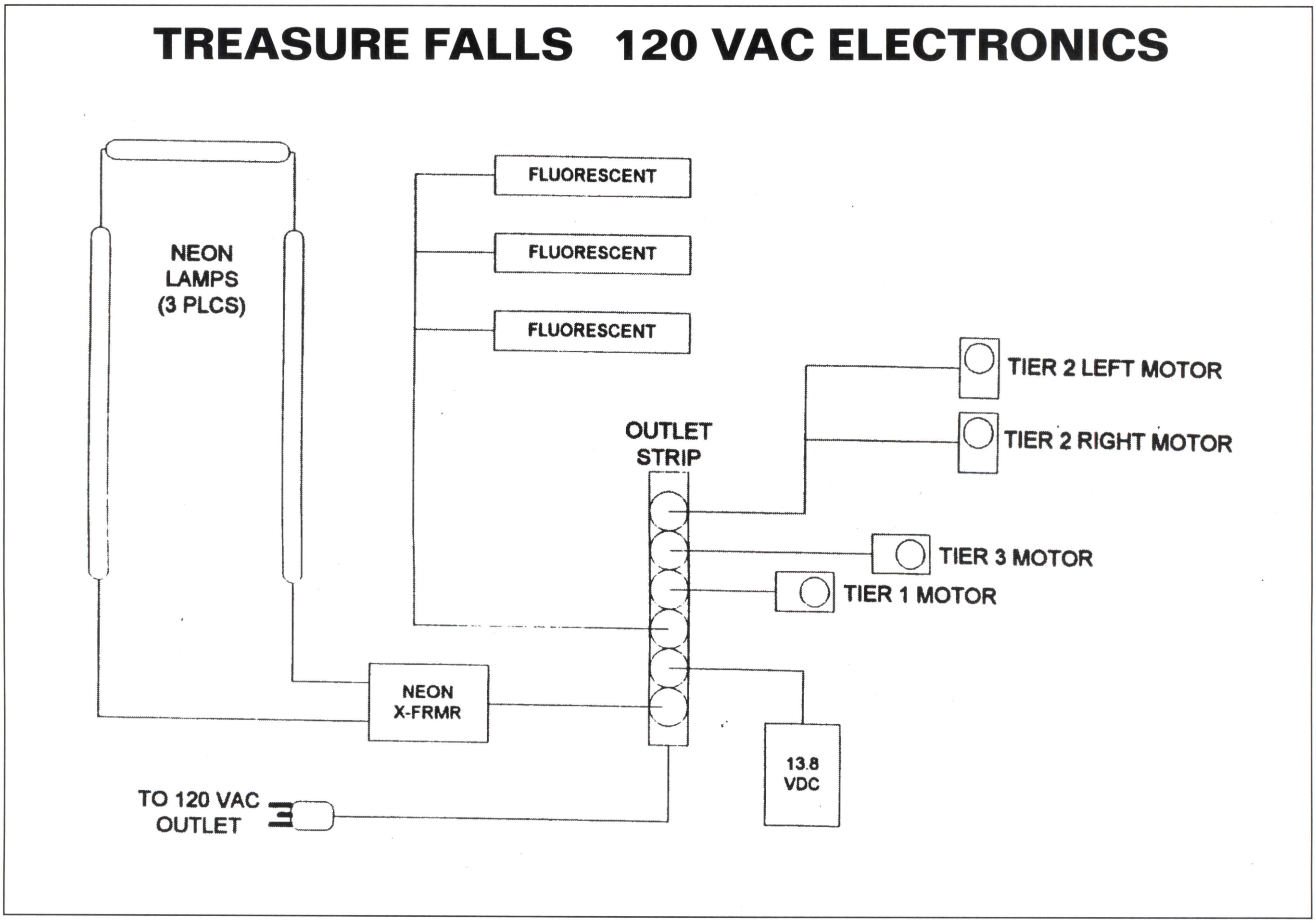
Near the bottom of the ticket bin, mounted one on top of the other, are two mini microswitches. The function of the top switch is to illuminate the "ticket low" light (the LED) on the ticket door. The lower microswitch has the same function as the on/off switch: when the ticket bin is almost empty, this switch opens and stops the game from counting down the tickets won as well as stopping the pulses from going to the ticket dispenser.

Since these switches are small, the actuating blades tend to bend from constant ticket filling. Once the switch blade is bent or broken off, the game either will not vend tickets or the ticket-low light will stay on even with a full bin. Exercise caution when filling the tickets so these switches remain operational.

The 120 volts AC main power distribution in each game is simple and straightforward. A six-outlet power strip provides power to the power supply, the overhead florescent lamps, the neon lighting, and the conveyor belt and sweeper motors. On *Pirate's Revenge* the sword spinner motor is a 12 volts DC motor controlled by the logic board.

All the games use basically the same style of power supply—a 13.8 volts DC power supply—that is the type used to power car radios and CB radio equipment at home. The power connections to the power supply are made through red and black thumb screw connectors. The red connector is for the plus 13.8 volts and the black is GND. Since the power supply is mounted with these connectors "up," tokens and quarters might build up around the thumb screws which could short out the power supply.

All of the low voltage (13.8 volts) power wires throughout each game are a twisted pair of red and black wires. There are four twisted pairs of wires. One set goes to each of the following: coin door lights, ticket dispenser, audio board, and main logic board. An extra set of wires may go to



the back targets to provide power for the jackpot dump motor. On *Pirate's Revenge* the extra set of wires connects to the sword spinner motor assembly.

The logic board and audio board both have an on-board regulator to drop the 13.8 volts DC to 5 volts DC. The logic board used in all of the games is the same, with minor modifications, like the microprocessor, which is programmed specifically for each game. *Pirate's Revenge* was manufactured in two versions—three-button and seven-button. The seven-button version has extensive modifications to the logic board to accommodate the extra buttons and lights.

All target, coin switch, and ticket dispenser connections to the logic board are made with four-pin modular connectors. These connectors look like standard telephone handset cords, but they're not. The cords used are straight-through connections, which means that pin 1 on the connector is connected to pin 1 on the other end, pin 2 connects to pin 2, and so on. On a telephone handset cord the pins are reversed so that pin 1 mates with pin 4, pin 2 matches pin 3, and so on. You may damage the logic board if you use a standard telephone handset cord.

Adjustments for the game, including ticket values for the targets, are done through software. There is an eight-position dip switch on the logic board, but it's used for game configurations, not adjustments. The dip switch controls functions such as attract mode sound, consolation points, and the use of a ticket or token dispenser. Since each game is different, refer to the dip switch chart in the game manual for proper switch settings.

Adjusting the game is done using four mini pushbuttons on the logic board, located on the upper left hand top edge, farthest from you. Since the logic board is mounted on the right side of the game, you have to use your left arm to reach into the game and feel for the proper button. These buttons are in a vertical column and labeled on the board.

There is a six-pin modular connector just above the push buttons. This connector is for a keypad to adjust the game settings. The keypad makes game adjustments a lot easier. I know how technicians like to experiment (I'm no different), so making a keypad is simple and saves headaches when adjusting the game. Call or e-mail me for the info on making a keyboard, and I'll fax it to you.

Pirate's Revenge uses the keyboard connector as an output expansion connector, so the keypad option is not available. The four adjustment buttons are labeled from top to bottom in this order: mode, reset, up, and down. The mode button adjusts the mode number. Again, each game is different so mode numbers change. As for *Grand Treasure Falls*, the mode numbers 1 though 6 are audits, mode 7 through 22 are outputs for the tooth lamps and jackpot dump motor, and modes 23

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through 38 are the inputs for the various targets. Most of the time the only mode settings that need to be changed are 23 through 38—the target settings.

Sometimes when a target will not work it's pretty easy to figure out where the problem lies because there is a target test to determine whether the problem is hardware or software related. This test is accessed through mode 192. When you push the mode button on the logic board, mode 191 is the first you'll see. It's followed by modes 192 and 193. Then mode 1 follows. Modes 191 and 193 change functions from game to game, but mode 192 stays the same. On *Grand Treasure Falls* mode 191 is the display for the average points (tickets) per coin. Mode 193 is not used.

When you access mode 192 the display goes blank with the individual segments representing each target. If you have a segment lit when you enter this test a target sensor is stuck. The segments are numbered from right to left; only the vertical segments are used for the target test. There are eight vertical columns of segments, two segments per column. So the segments on the far right represent targets one and two, and the ones to the far left column displays targets 15 and 16. There are only 16 target circuits per game logic board, but each target circuit can have up to three targets, making a total of 48 targets.

This makes troubleshooting a bit difficult, since a stuck target on the display could be one of three targets. It's really not that hard to figure out which is the problem target. The target connections on the logic board consist of 16 columns of three modular connections per row. The 16 rows correspond to the target test display. Just unplug one of the connectors in that row. If the segment on the display goes blank, this is the bad target. If not, replug the connector and go to the one below it.

If you disconnect all three modular connectors and the target test display still shows a stuck target, you have a board problem. Not to worry (this is the cool part). Just move the connectors to an unused row and reprogram that new row for the same target value as the bad row. On *Grand Treasure Falls*, target row 4 is not used. So if I had a bad target circuit on target row 13, which is tier 3 (lowest tier) and jewels 1 and 5 set at 10 points, I would just move the two modular connectors form row 13 to row 4 and reprogram row 4 for 10 points.

Most of the time the stuck target is the result of a stuck coin or dirt buildup between the target sensors. It makes sense because all the targets are opto targets (the target is "activated" by a coin blocking the light path). ▲

If you have questions or comments, or want that information on the keypad, I can be reached at (760)322-4000 or by e-mail (Vic@Vicco.com).

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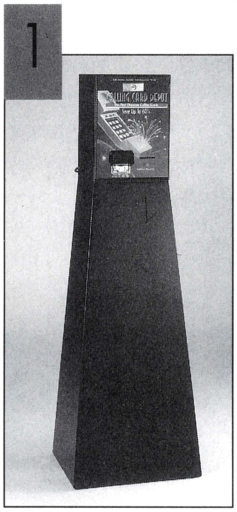
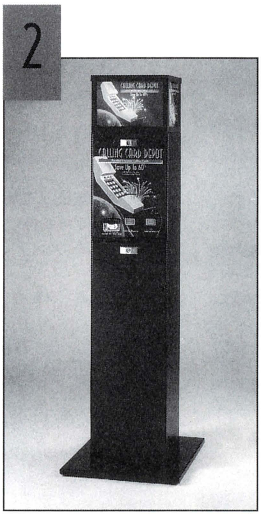


Model 801



Model 802

Model 803-D

Calling Card Depot™ vends discount long distance calling cards in three state-of-the-art machines that feature rugged, dependable service. A 4-sided marquee top adorns the two column model and a vacuum fluorescent dot-matrix moving sales message sign is available as an option for additional attraction.

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SPORTING
EDGE

BullShooter tour stops in Grand Island, N.Y.

Arachnid's BullShooter Tour headed east recently, stopping in Grand Island, N.Y., for an $8,000 regional qualifier held at the Holiday Inn. The event was co-sponsored by Mondial Distributing in Rochester, N.Y.

With some of the best shooters from Pennsylvania, New York, and Canada present, finishing in the top three in the main events, and thus earning a spot in the BullShooter Finals, was a real honor. The $100,000 finals will be held over the Memorial Day weekend in the Chicago area.

Here's a look at the final results:

Women's Doubles: 1st–Debbie Shutt and Kathy Karpowich, both of Freeland, Pa.; 2nd–Rani Gill and Anne Fisher, both of Ontario, Canada; 3rd–Shelley Brock of Tonawanda and Linda Spratley of Newark.

Men's Doubles: 1st–Rob Toy of Buffalo and Joe Slivan of N. Tonawanda; 2nd–Pat Fagan of Rochester and Joseph Kinney of Fairport; 3rd–Skip Weaver of Caledonia and Mark Guenther of Livonia.

Pro Doubles: 1st–Joe Haganey of W. Hazelton, Pa., and Michael Abboud of Conyngham, Pa.; 2nd–Gary Mawson and Avtar Gill, both of Ontario, Canada; 3rd–Dave Albright of Lebanon, Pa., and Ed Rebstock of Lansdale, Pa.

Mixed Triples: 1st–Gary Mawson, Avtar Gill, and Rani Gill, all of Ontario, Canada; 2nd–Anne Fisher of Ontario, Canada; Rob Toy of Buffalo; and Joe Slivan of N. Tonawanda; 3rd–Ed Rebstock of Lansdale, Pa.; Dave Albright of Lebanon, Pa.; and Maria Fricker of Hatfield, Pa.

Cricket Doubles: 1st–John Denich and Earl Rowe, both of Ontario, Canada; 2nd–Walter Pankow of Lackawanna and Mike Maracle of West Valley; 3rd–Joe Slivan of N. Tonawanda and Rob Toy of Buffalo.

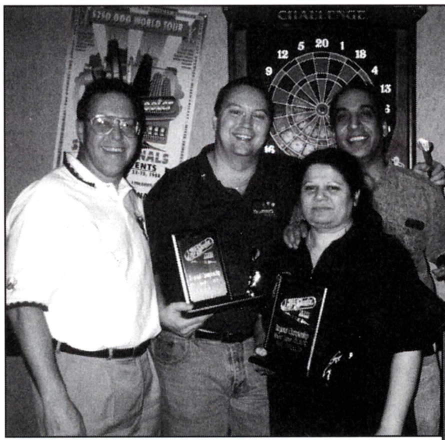
Pro Cricket: 1st–Gary Mawson of Ontario, Canada; 2nd–Wayne Spratley of Newark; 3rd–Avtar Gill of Ontario, Canada.

Women's Singles: 1st–Anne Fisher of Ontario, Canada; 2nd–Kathy Karpowich of Freeland, Pa.; 3rd–Fran Ginder of Lansdale, Pa.

Men's Singles: 1st–Duane Molark of Fishkill; 2nd–Jim Graton of Niagara Falls; 3rd–Rob Urbano of Geneva.

Pro Singles: 1st–Joe Haganey of W. Hazelton, Pa.; 2nd–Gary Mawson of Ontario, Canada; 3rd–Dave Brock of Tonawanda.

Mixed Doubles Cricket: 1st–Debbie Shutt of Freeland, Pa., and Michael Abboud of Conyngham, Pa.; 2nd–Kathy Karpowich of Freeland, Pa., and Joe Haganey of W. Hazelton, Pa.; 3rd–Gary Mawson and Anne Fisher, both of Ontario, Canada. ▲



Top photo:
From left: Arachnid's Bob Mills with Mixed Triples winners Gary Mawson, Avtar Gill, and Rani Gill.

Bottom photo:
Women's Doubles champions Debbie Shutt (l) and Kathy Karpowich with tournament director Brad Boe.

TRAK VEND INTERFACE

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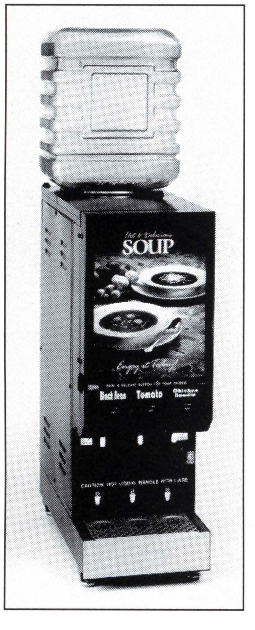
Van Brook of Lexington presents its new Trak Vend Interface which allows Token Tech 2000 Dispensers to be connected to any IBM-compatible PCs. Up to three dispensers can be used with the Trak Vend, and the result is a sophisticated management information system which can display or printout any time.

Electronic memory keeps operators up to the minute, and data can be stored in memory as long as necessary. Every Trak Vend comes with a diskette program ready to be installed in the PC. It is also designed to be readily adaptable for most token dispensers now in use.

No matter the size of the operation, the system allows for quick and easy data transmitting to the home office. This can be done by modem, fax, printout, and e-mail. Up to 40 different product sales features can be programmed, and the unit has numerous security controls and continuous monitoring and memory features.

For more information, contact Van Brook of Lexington; (606)231-7100 or (800)553-3134; fax (606)231-7108.

SOUP DISPENSERS

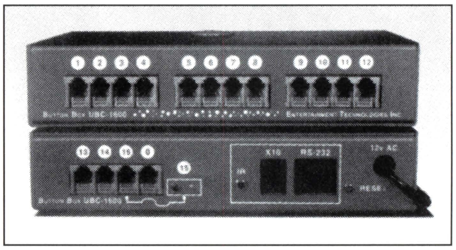


Cecilware announces the newest addition to its Pour-Over series of soup dispensers, the Soup-4P. As with all of its soup dispensers, the Pour-Over series comes equipped with Cecilware's adjustable thickness control which allows an operator to adjust the texture of the soup.

The unit is designed to accommodate a three- to six-gallon water bottle as the main water source. There are four different product hoppers, each having the ability to hold four pounds of soup. Other standard features include direct drive gear systems, vacuum steam removal systems, and the power blender which mixes the soup into a hearty, delicious meal. Each dispenser comes with point-of-sale material including a three-sided hanging mobile kit, 24" x 36" full-color poster, and 50 frequent soup purchase cards.

For more information, contact Cecilware, (718)932-1414; fax (718)932-7860; e-mail (cecilmark@aol.com).

BUTTON BOX



Entertainment Technologies Interactive Studios introduces its Button Box UBC-1600 Universal Button Controller, a programmable interface that allows the user to easily direct and coordinate a variety of electronic devices.

Designed for use in kiosk environments, it is sophisticated enough for theme parks and reliable enough for museums. This 16-button controller accepts professional devices, consumer media and accessory devices, and even other controllers.

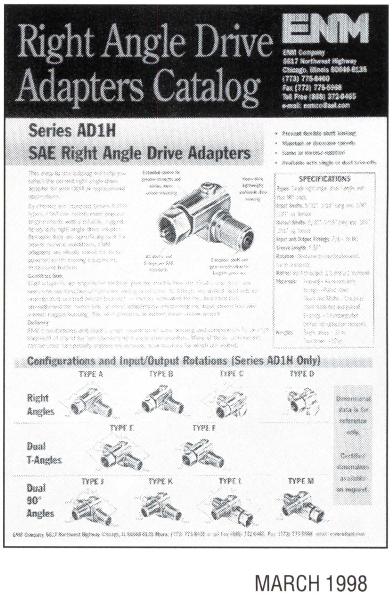
Features include easy programmability, dual port versatility, and unrivaled functionality. Professional devices connect through a pre-programmed serial port dedicated to LaserDisc Pro and DVD Pro players, VTRs, Sony monitors, and RS-232 communications as well as other control devices.

The Button Box offers infrared consumer equipment interface technology and the ability to control lights, motors, fans, and alarms via an X-10 device. It ships with application software that can be rapidly downloaded into the unit.

For more information, contact Entertainment Technologies Interactive Studios; (407)370-9000; fax (407)370-9007; e-mail (webmaster@et-studios.com); Web site (http://www.et-studios.com).

ENM CATALOG

ENM announces the release of its 1998 Right Angle Drive Adapter Catalog, which guides its customers through easy-to-follow steps to aid in selecting the perfect driver for original equipment manufacturer or replacement application.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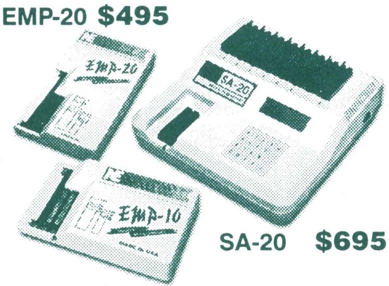

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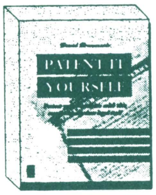

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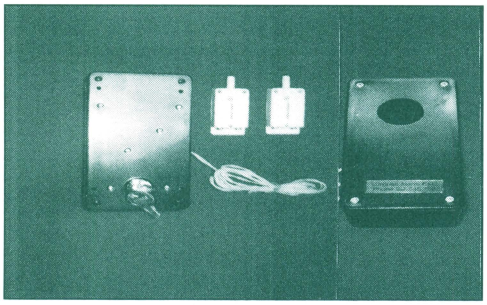

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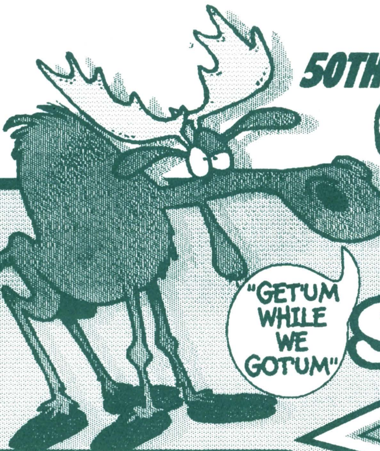

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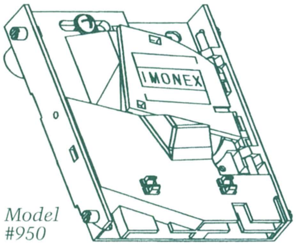

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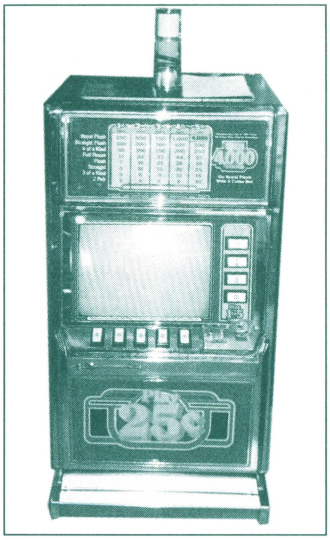

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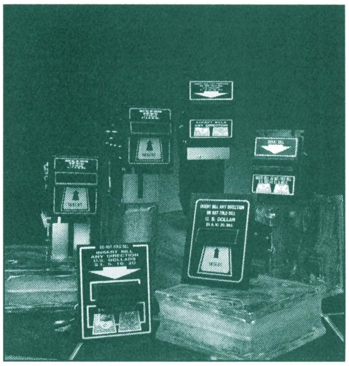

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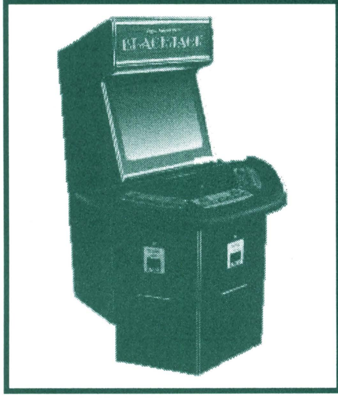

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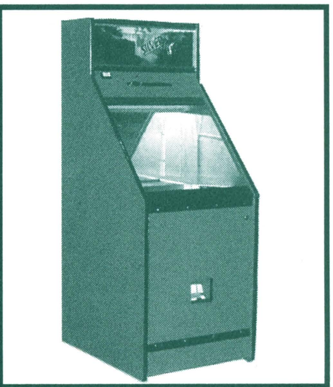

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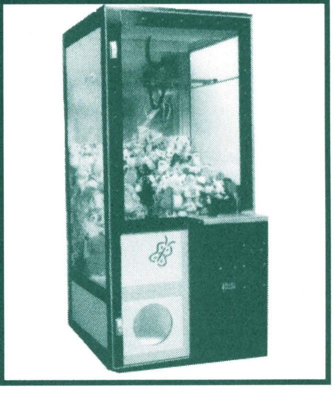

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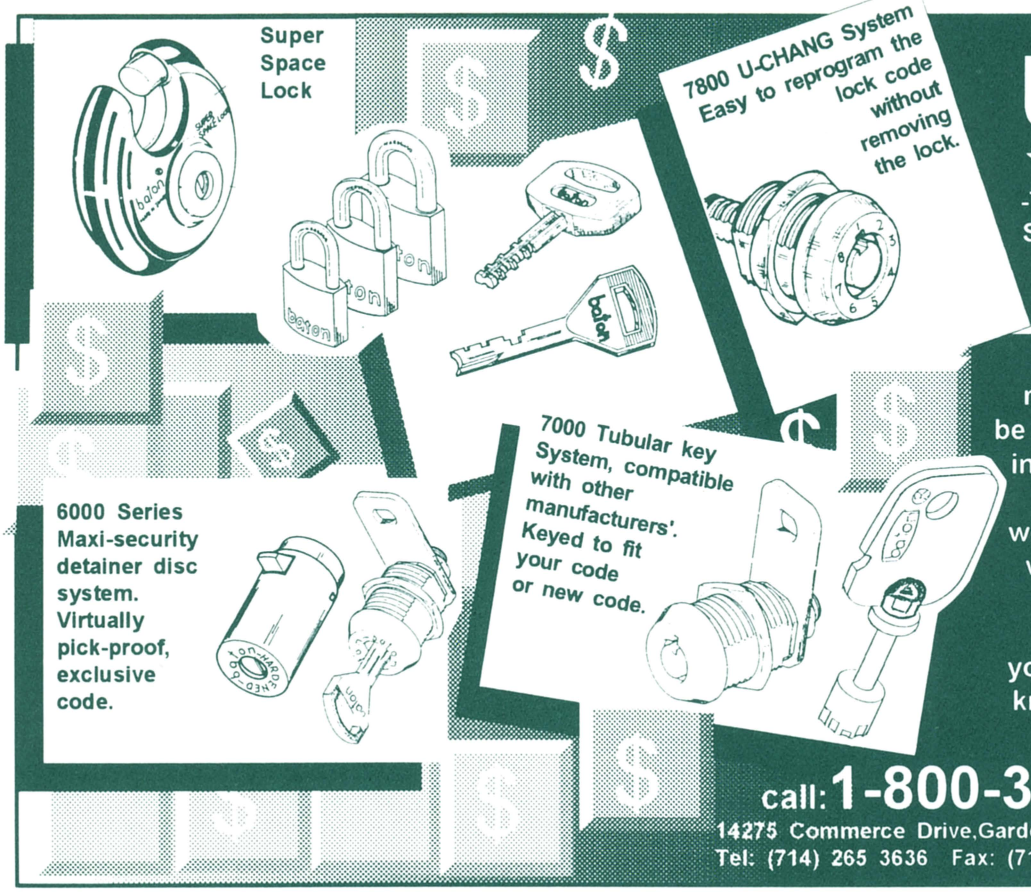
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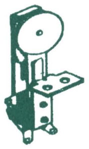

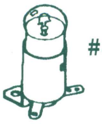

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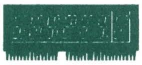
PREM.  **GOT.**

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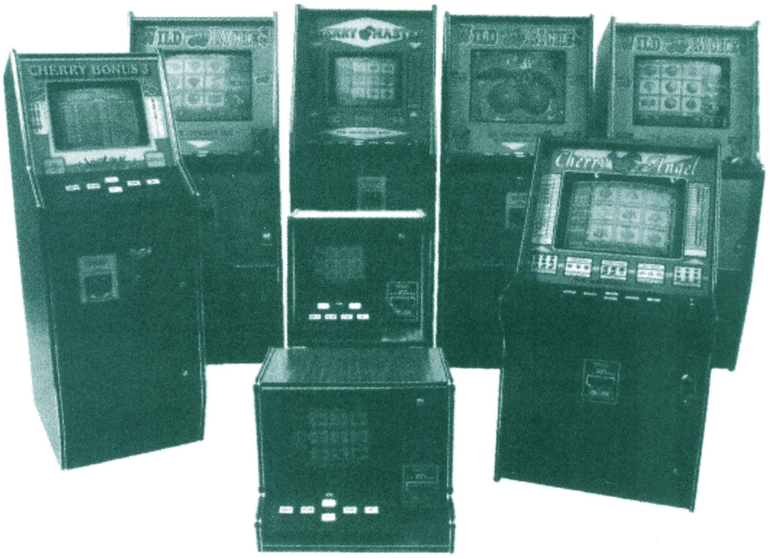

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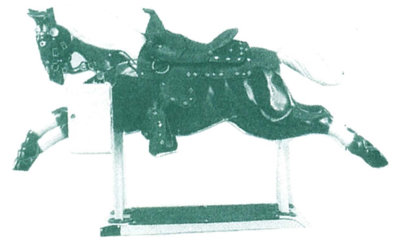

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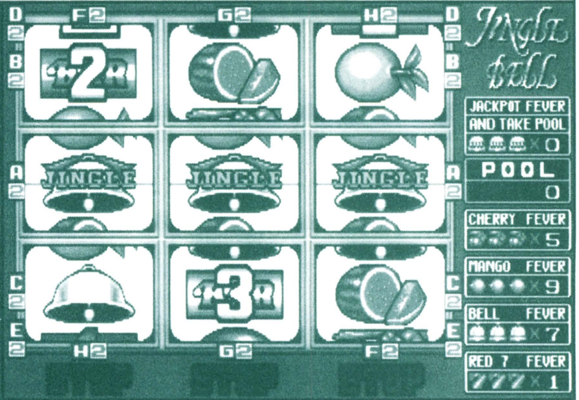
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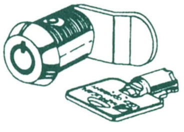

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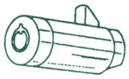

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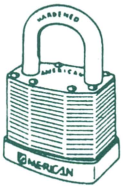

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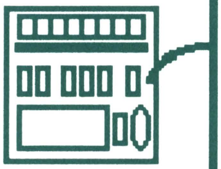

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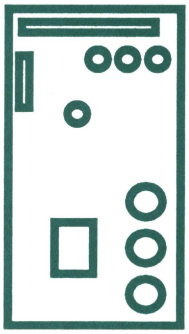

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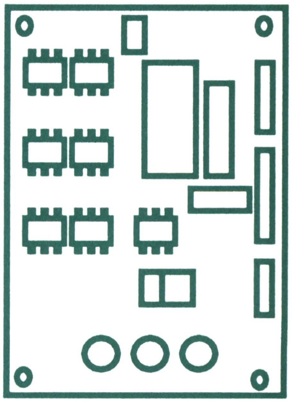

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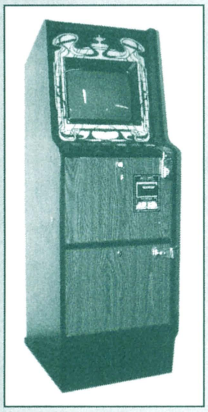

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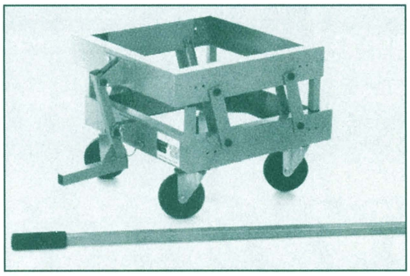

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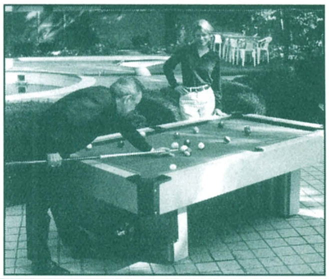

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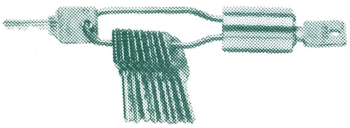

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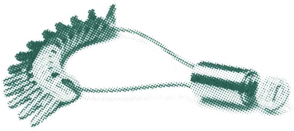

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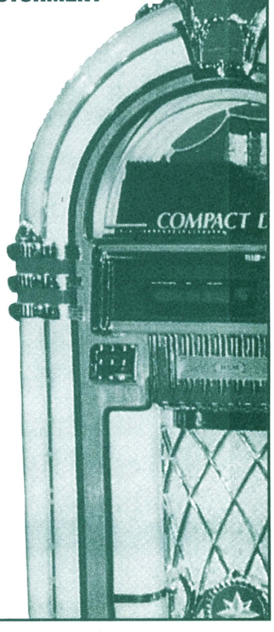

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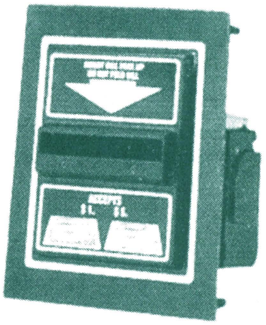

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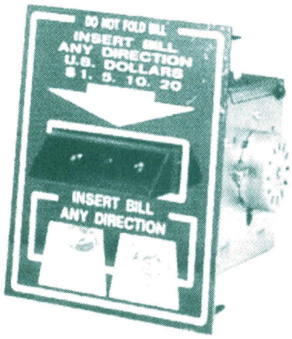
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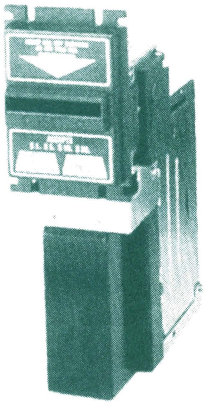

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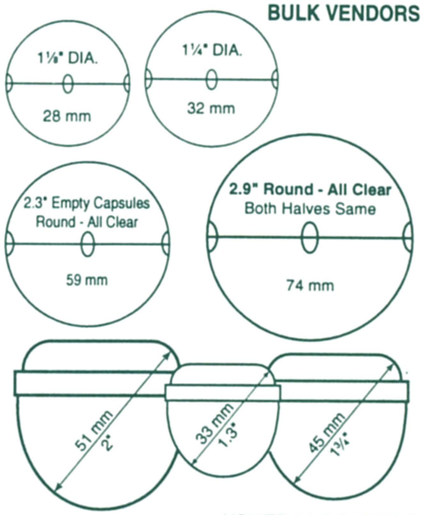

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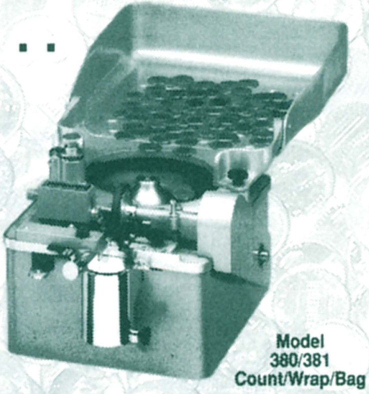

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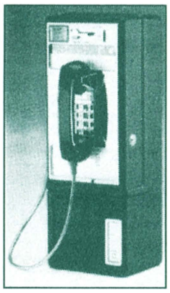

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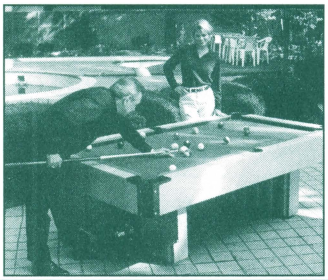

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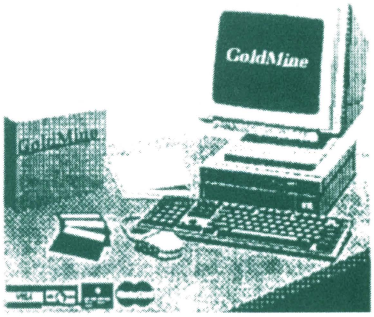

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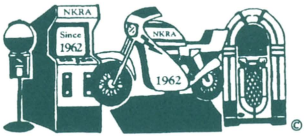

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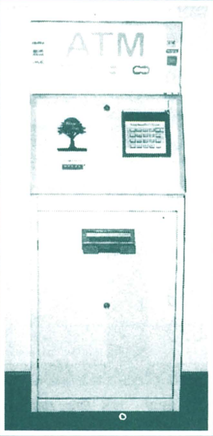

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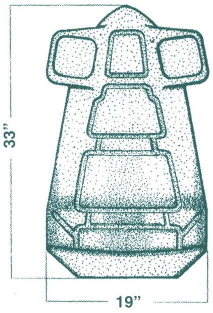

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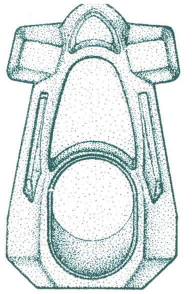

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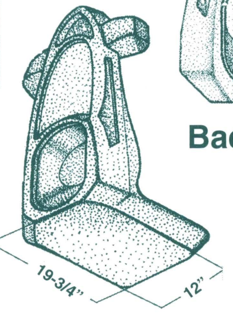

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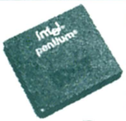

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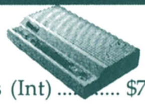

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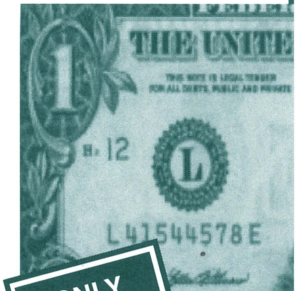

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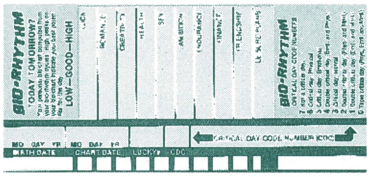

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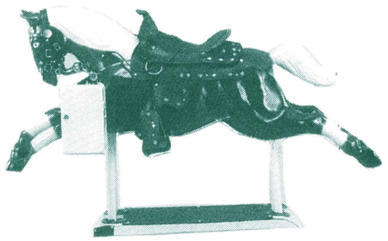

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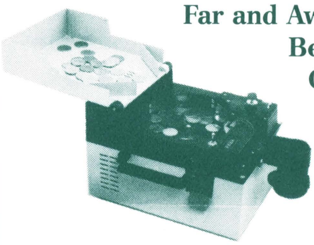

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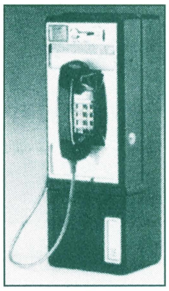

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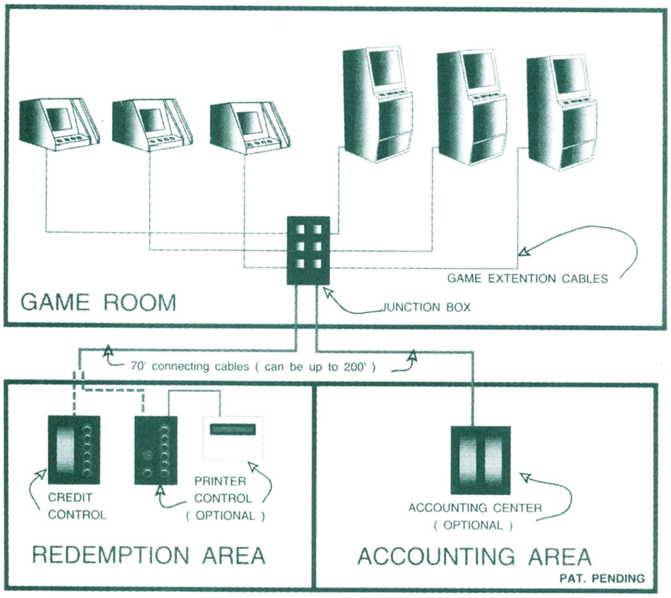
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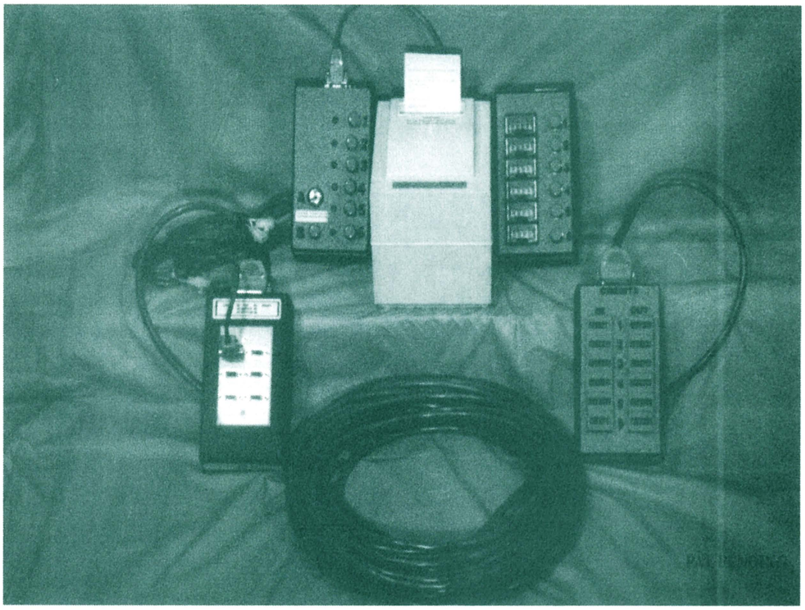

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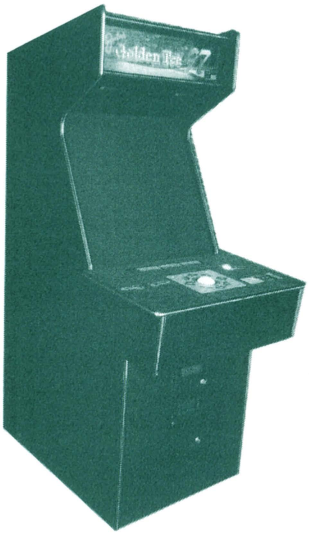

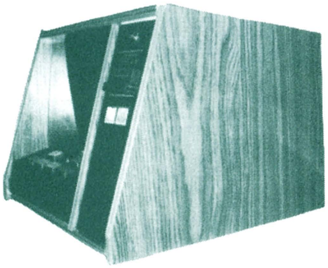

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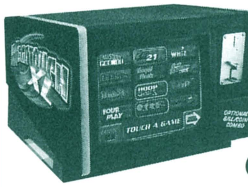

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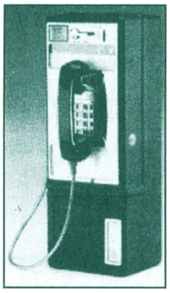

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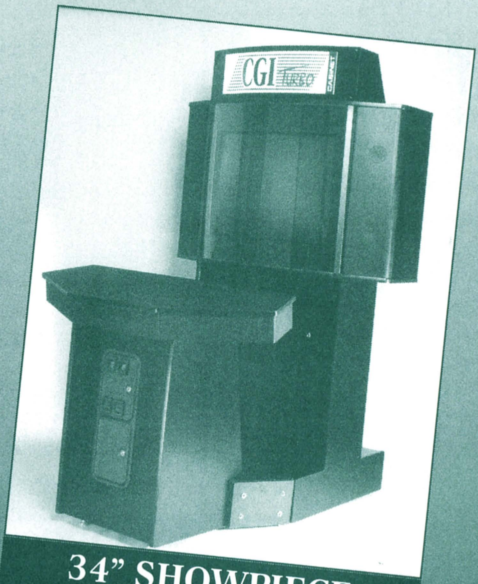

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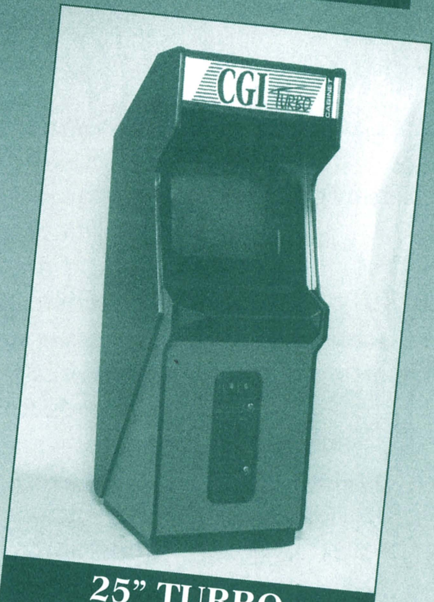

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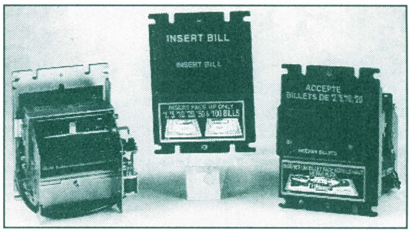

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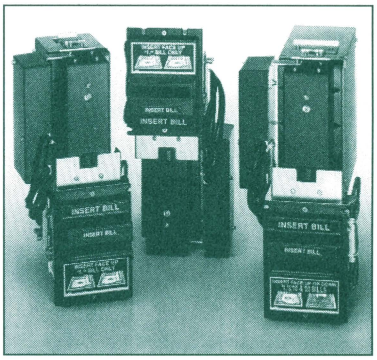

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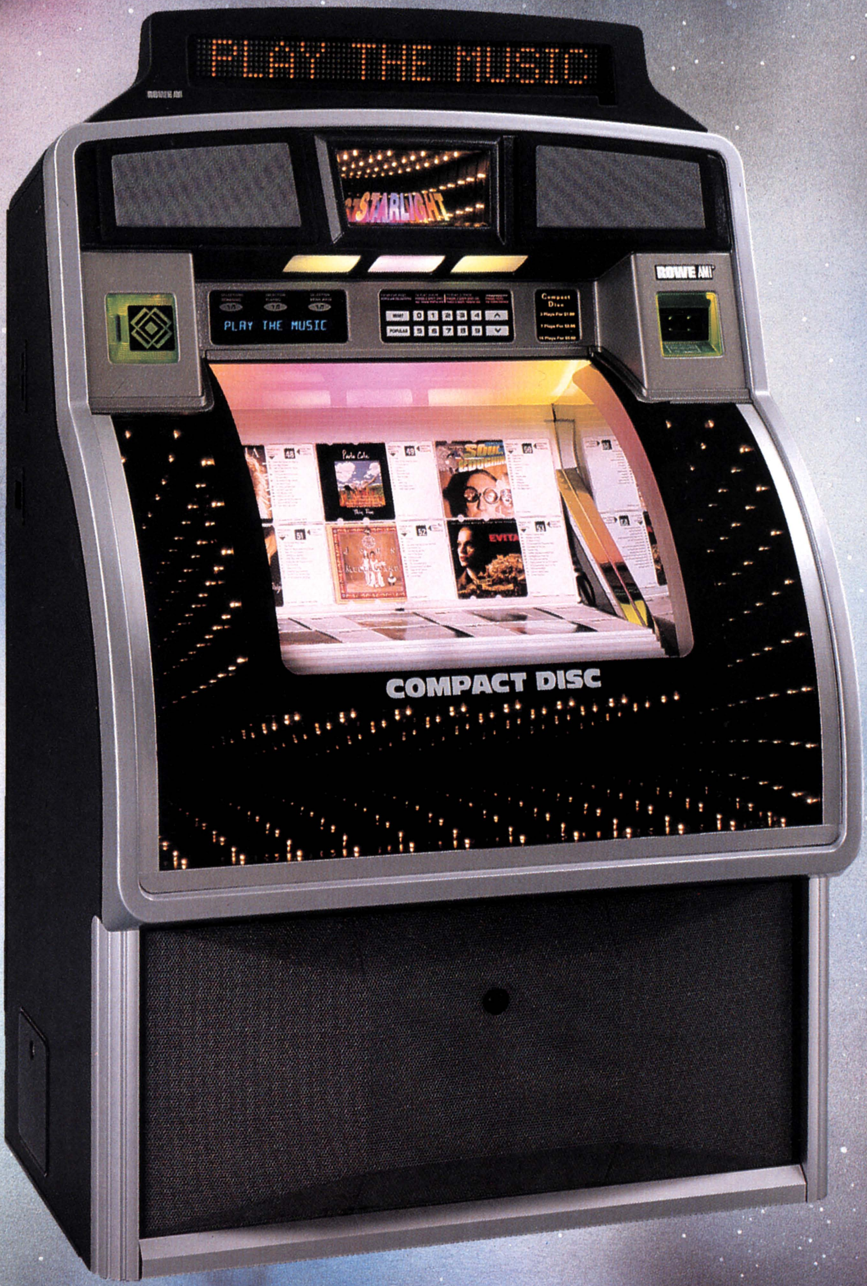

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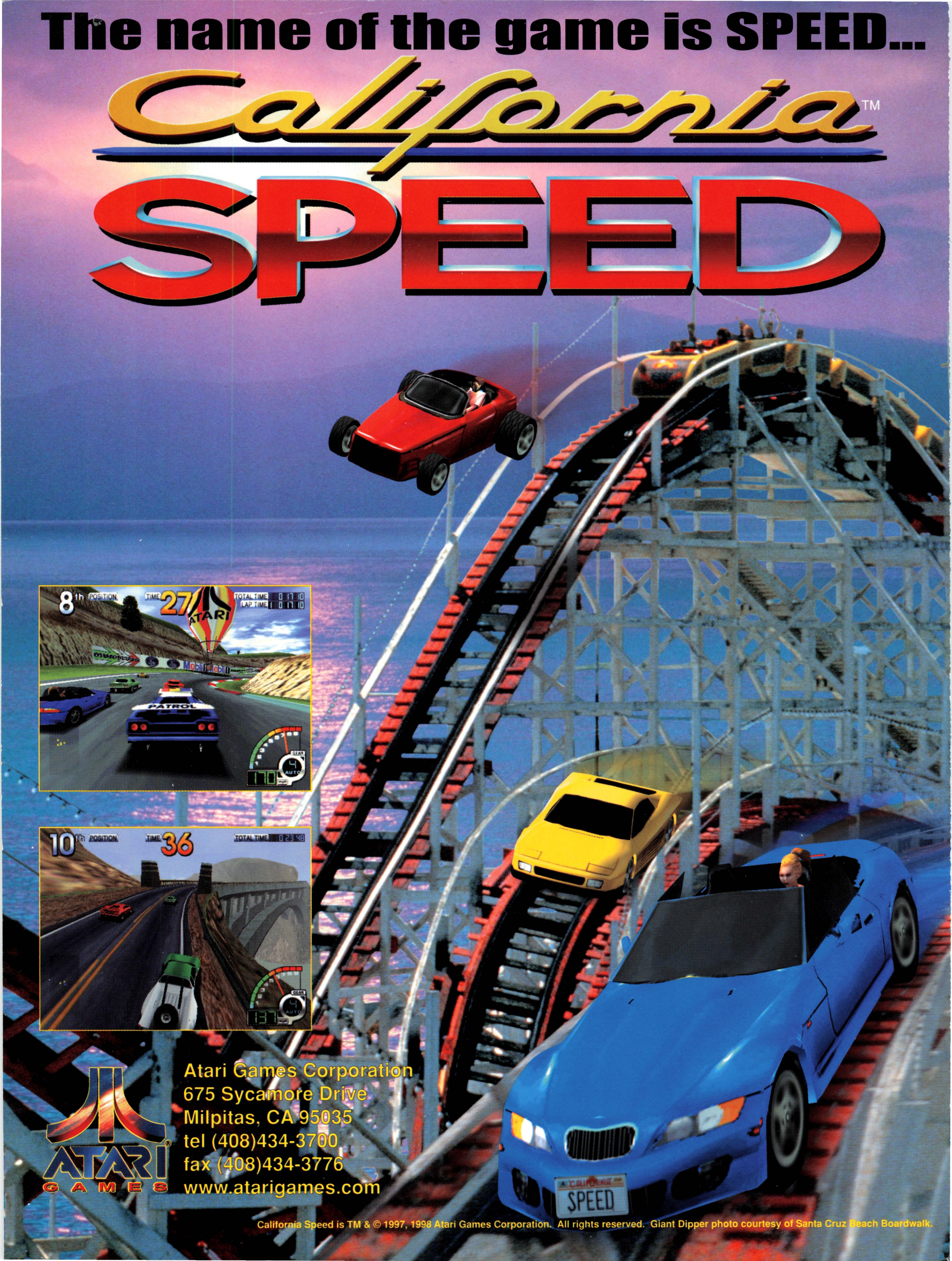
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